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MEN OF THE WORLD, MID HUM AND STIR, RING OF ANVIL AND FRET OF LOOM,
BUILD FOR YOUR THOUGHT A THOROUGHFARE, KEEP FOR YOUR SOUL A SILENT ROOM.

THE POETRY REVIEW

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VOLUME XVIII

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INDEX TO VOLUME XVIII

ARTICLES AND POEMS		PAGE
<i>After an Earthquake.</i> Julia Boynton Green		259
<i>After Change.</i> Nancy Pollok		239
<i>Africa, Creole Poetry of West.</i> Aquah Lualah		270
<i>American Letter, An</i>	37, 111, 199,	335
<i>American Poet of the Month, The.</i> Helen Hartness Flanders .		204
<i>American Poetry, Dynamics of.</i> Alice Hunt Bartlett.		
	XIII. Julia Dabney	335
	XIV. Stanton Coblentz	399
<i>Ancient Epitaph, An.</i> John Cook		278
<i>Andromeda.</i> I. K. Nagel		228
<i>Anglo-Cymric School of Poets, The.</i> Lewis Davies		279
<i>Angus, Marian. Poems by</i>		349
<i>An Offering.</i> John Willwyn		374
<i>Art of Verse-Speaking, Consistency and Variety.</i>		
	Lilian E. Simpson	43
<i>Ayr.</i> Helen B. G. Sutherland		152
<i>Beauty.</i> K. M. Boothroyd		384
<i>Bedtime.</i> W. Handley Jones		269
<i>Bermudas, The.</i> Poems by : A. Doris L. Wilson, Hilda McDonald,		
	Winifred M. Cousins, Edith M. Walker, Clinton Scollard	73, 299
<i>Bermuda Prize Poem Awards</i>		131
<i>Birth of Venus, The.</i> Dorothy Ewens		179
<i>Bourne, The.</i> Hugh Moorland		15
<i>Bronze Boy, The.</i> M. Allison		35
<i>Browning as a Dramatist</i>		140
<i>Browning's "O Lyric Love."</i> Allen Brockington		365
<i>Call, The.</i> Kitty Morris		355
<i>Cathedral, The.</i> E. Joyce Harrison		11
<i>Child Study in Poetry, The beginnings of the.</i> M. Schofield .		97
<i>Children, Poetry for.</i>		413
<i>Children in Poetry</i>		265
<i>Clarity in Poetry</i>		66
<i>Coblentz, Stanton</i>		399
<i>Common Story, A.</i> D. F. Radford		263
<i>Creative Writing is Epidemic, Where.</i> Helen Hartness Flanders		111
<i>Creole Poetry of West Africa.</i> Aquah Lualah		270
<i>Criticism, Essays in</i>	405, 409, 411,	413
<i>Dancers of the Mind.</i> D. F. Radford		10
<i>d'Annunzio, The Poetry of Gabriel.</i> F. Olivero		81
<i>Death of : Mr. W. F. Rawnsley</i>		145
<i>Death of : Lord Coleridge, Mr. Lewis Hind, Mr. Noel Wills</i>		429
<i>Devotional Poets of the XVII. Century</i>		117
<i>Dreams.</i> Nina Charlotte Martin		310
<i>Eastern Plays and Poems.</i> Gwendoline Goodwin		274
<i>Elegy of a Londoner, The</i>		45
<i>Epitaph.</i> F. Kemp		384

INDEX TO VOLUME XVIII

	PAGE
Essays in Criticism :	
Landed Poets. Helen Hartness Flanders	405
Atlantis Restored? Michael Fraenkel	409
A Public School Master on Poetry Reading	411
Poetry for Children. Poems by Eleanor Farjeon and Elizabeth Fleming	413
Evening Song, Judith Brundrett Tweedale	8
Examination Pass Lists. Verse-Speaking	44, 68, 218, 363
Examination Test Pieces. Verse Speaking	436
Fair Maid of Shetland. E. M. Smith Dampier. . . .	13
Fat Lady Walks Abroad. A. Esther Samms	303
February. K. M. Munday	9
Fervent Note in New Poetry	187
Finis. Cyril G. Taylor. . . .	28
Forms of Poetry, The. Helen Hartness Flanders	37
From Plodder to Pilot. Julia Boynton Green	371
Function of Poetry, The. T. E. Casson. . . .	301
Great Spaces. Carla Lanyon Lanyon	383
Greek Poetry, Modern. Prof. S. Menardos (I, II, III, IV)	153, 247, 313, 385
Gipsy Girl. A. M. J. Hamilton	178
Gold Medal for Verse-Speaking, The Poetry Society's	63
Haunted Hill, The. Cyril G. Taylor	297
Heroics. T. E. Casson	376
Her Portrait. Bertha M. Skeat	246
Idealist's Marriage, An. A. Russell	398
Imagination Ever Expanding. Arthur Hood	225
In a Green Field. A. Doris L. Wilson	304
Indian Poetry, The Religious Influence of. Gwendoline Goodwin	196
In Defence of Francis Thompson. M. K. M. Brown	427
In Dispraise of Learning. Charles Wharton Stork	87
Intuition, The Poetry of. G. M. Marriage	305
In Winter. Vera I. Arlett	246
Italian Poets, Modern. F. Olivero	229
Isolation. Rosa Waugh Hobhouse	4
Keats and Music	67
Landed Poets. Helen Hartness Flanders	405
Lately Known. Rosa Waugh Hobhouse	258
Lewis Premium Offers and Awards	137, 296, 359
Little Lane, The. A. Doris L. Wilson	300
Lincoln. Edwin Markham	199
Londoner, The Elegy of a	45
Magic. Hugh B. Cott	375
Markham, Edwin	199
Masquerade. Joyce Sambrook	172
Mechanism or Spontaniety? Arthur Hood	181

INDEX TO VOLUME XVIII

	PAGE
<i>Meditation on Mirth, A.</i> Julia Boynton Green.	5
<i>Men Will Remember.</i> Eric B. W. Chappelow	165
Merchant of Venice, The Tragic Element in. M. B. Foote	54
Meredith, The Poetry of George. J. M. Stuart-Young	173
<i>Miracles.</i> Edna Davis Romig	373
Modern Greek Poetry. Prof. S. Menardos	153, 247, 313, 385
Modern Portuguese Poetry. Ethel Rosenthal and Ethel Pope	29
Modern Italian Poets. F. Olivero.	229
<i>Moods.</i> H. E. Flanders	357
Night Scenes from the Poets. J. M. Stuart-Young	21
<i>Night that Covers Me, The.</i> Henry Martin	36
<i>No Luck!</i> Charles Wharton Stork	264
<i>Nostalgie.</i> Edna A. Kahla	88
Note on the Sonnet, A. Rex Clements	285
Old Themes, New Poets. Helen Hartness Flanders	337
Ollivant, The Influence of Alfred	209
<i>One Wet Day.</i> A. Doris L. Wilson	15
Poet, D. G. Rossetti as a. J. M. Stuart-Young	89
Graham G. Hough and Cicely M. Barker	213
of the Month, American	204
A Great Polish	125
Poets and the Poetic Principle, The	147
Poets, The Anglo-Cymric School of. Lewis Davies	279
Devotional of the Seventeenth Century	117
Landed. Helen Hartness Flanders	405
Modern Italian. Prof. F. Olivero	229
Night Scenes from the. J. M. Stuart-Young	21
Sense and Sensibility in Young	119
<i>Poet's Song, The.</i> M. K. M. Brown	228
Poet's Vision, A. T. E. Casson	139
Poetry, The Beginnings of the Child Study in	97
Clarity in	66
Creole of West Africa. Aquah Luluah	270
in California	290
for Children	413
On Reading Aloud	65, 113, 411
of Carl Sandburg. Wayne Gard	17
Gabriel d'Annunzio. F. Olivero	81
Lady Margaret Sackville. Aylmer Strong	26
George Meredith. J. M. Stuart-Young	173
Lew Sarett. Wayne Gard	329
Lewis Spence. Lady Margaret Sackville	241
To-day	345
Intuition. G. M. Marriage	305
the Seventeenth Century	211

INDEX TO VOLUME XVIII

	PAGE
Poetry, Dynamics of American. Alice Hunt Bartlett	335, 399
The Forms of. Helen Hartness Flanders.	37
The Fervent Note in New	187
The Function of. T. E. Casson	301
Modern Greek. Prof. S. Menardos	153, 247, 313, 385
Portuguese. Ethel Rosenthal and Ethel Pope	29
The Religious Influence of Indian	196
Scots and New Poets. Florence Cortis-Stanford	349
Charles Graves	426
What is. Wilfrid Merrifield	77
Poetry Society, The, and Its Journal. W. F. Rawnsley	47
Progress of	363
Lord Coleridge's Speech and Appeal	429
International. Union	216
<i>Poor Man's Rebellion</i> , A. Alfred H. Mendes	151
Portraiture in Poetry	137, 296
Portuguese Poetry, Modern. Ethel Rosenthal and Ethel Pope	29
Power of the Spirit, The	293
<i>Prayer for Joy</i> , A. Vera I. Arlett	7
Premium Editor's Reports	55, 206, 289, 296, 358, 433
Public School-Master on Poetry Reading, A	411
<i>Quartet</i> . Dorothy Ewens	327
Rawnsley, The Death of Mr. W. F.	145
Religious Influence of Indian Poetry, The	196
<i>Requiem</i> . J. W. Nance	369
<i>Resurgence</i> . Verne Bright	369
<i>Revelation</i> . P. Joshua	7
Reviews	37, 39, 40, 59, 101, 111, 116, 138, 181, 187, 204, 207, 225, 265, 274, 282, 335, 337, 341, 345, 377, 405, 409, 411, 416, 420
<i>Rolling Stone</i> , The. Nancy Pollok	8
Rossetti as a Poet. J. M. Stuart-Young, Graham G. Hough, Cicely M. Barker	89, 213
<i>Round Strasburg</i> . Helena Derezsinska	304
Sackville, The Poetry of Lady Margaret. Aylmer Strong	26
Sackville, Lady Margaret, on Verse-Speaking	294
<i>Sacrifice</i> . Belfrage Gilbertson	164
Sandburg, Carl, The Poetry of. Wayne Gard	17
<i>Sand Castles</i> . José Fielding	36
Sarett, Lew, The Poetry of. Wayne Gard	329
<i>Sea Hunger</i> . Verne Bright	336
Scots Poetry and New Poets. Florence Cortis-Stanford	349
Charles Graves	426
<i>Service</i>	404

INDEX TO VOLUME XVIII

	PAGE
"Service" Poem Awards	433
Shakespeare Papers, The. M. B. Foote	54, 127
Shakespeare Memorial Theatre Fund	143, 360
Verse Competition. Adjudicators' Reports	360
<i>Shepherd's Funeral, The.</i> D. Una Ratcliffe	333
Simple and Complex. Arthur Hood	377
<i>Song of Evening.</i> Morwyth Rees	11
<i>Song of the Sea, A.</i> Victor Ballan	79
Sonnet, A Note of the. Rex Clements	285
<i>Some Shall Toil Greatly.</i> Barbara E. Smythe	245
Spence, Lewis, The Poetry of. Lady Margaret Sackville	241
Spenser in French Eyes	39
<i>Sport.</i> Noel Allport	152
Swinburne, Mr. T. Earle Welby's Study of. A. W. Wills	341
<i>Tea-time in March.</i> Nancy Pollok	109
Test Pieces, Verse-Speaking Examination	436
Tennyson Commentary, A. 49, 121, 284, 368,	440
<i>They Crucified Him.</i> Evelyn Bangay	146
<i>Though these have Fame.</i> A. Doris L. Wilson	110
Thompson, Francis, In Defence of. M. K. M. Brown	427
<i>To Byron.</i> M. Malakassis	403
<i>To Spain.</i> E. Crosby Heath	240
<i>To my First Love.</i> Peter Raymond	171
Toys of the Spirit. Laura C. Farnell	265
Tragic Element in the Merchant of Venice, The. M. B. Foote	54
<i>Unspent.</i> J. M. Soper	12
<i>Vagabond, The.</i> G. E. Merrick	298
Verse, Young Peoples'	353
Verse-Speaking, Consistency and Variety in. Lilian E. Simpson	43
Examination Pass Lists 68, 144, 218,	436
The Lady Margaret Sackville on	294
The Poetry Society Gold Medal for	63
Test Pieces. Examination	436
Watchman, What of the Night? Arthur Hood	101
Where Creative Writing is Epidemic. Helen Hartness Flanders	111
<i>Winter Fairies.</i> W. Handley Jones	1
<i>Winter Sunset.</i> A. M. J. Hamilton	4
<i>Wireless in a Sick-Room.</i> Nancy Pollok	177
<i>Woman's Thought, A.</i> J. J. Vakil	16
<i>Wood, The.</i> Helena Derezińska	149
<i>Woodland Bush, The.</i> Rosa Waugh Hobhouse	35
<i>Worship.</i> Allen Brockington	398
<i>Writer of Vers Libre, To a.</i> H. S. Miller	20
<i>You.</i> Lily E. F. Barry	296
Young People's Verse	353

INDEX TO VOLUME XVIII

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

	PAGE		PAGE
Allison, M.	35	Hobhouse, Rosa Waugh	4, 35,
Allport, Noel	152		258
Angus, Marian	349	Hood, Arthur	101, 181, 225, 377
Arlett, Vera I.	7, 246	Hough, Graham G.	313
Ballan, Victor	79	Jones, W. Handley	1, 269
Bangay, Evelyn D.	146, 345	Joshua, P.	7
Barry, Lily E. F.	296	Kahla, Edna A.	88
Barker, Cicely	215	Kemp, F.	384
Bartlett, Alice Hunt	199, 335, 399	Laluah, Aquah	270
Boothroyd, K. M.	384	Lanyon, Carla Lanyon	383
Bright, Verne	334, 369	Malakassis, M.	403
Brockington, Allen	365, 398	Markham, Edwin	199
Brown, M. K. M.	228, 427	Martin, Henry	36
Casson, T. E.	139, 301, 376	Martin, Mina Charlotte	310
Chappelow, Eric B. W.	165	Marriage, G. M.	305
Clements, Rex	285	Mawdsley, R. H.	132
Coblentz, Stanton	429	Merrick, G. E.	298
Coleridge, Lord	399	Merrifield, Wilfrid	77
Cook, John	278	McDonald, Hilda	51, 73, 132, 368
Cortis-Stanford, Florence	349	Menardos, Prof. Simos	153, 247,
Cott, Hugh B.	375		313, 385
Cousins, Winifred M.	74	Mendes, Alfred H.	151
Cruikshank, J. A. C.	49, 440	Miller, H. S.	20
Dampier, E. M. Smith	13	Moorland, Hugh	15
Davies, Lewis	279	Morris, Kitty	355
Derezinska, Helena	149, 304	Munday, K. M.	9, 121
Ewens, Dorothy	179, 327	Nagel, I. K.	228
Farnell, Laura C.	265	Nance, J. W.	369
Flanders, Helen Hartness	37, 111	Olivero, Federico	81, 229
	204, 405	Pollok, Nancy	8, 109, 177, 239
Flanders, H. E.	357	Pope, Ethel	29
Fielding, Jose	36	Radford, D. R.	10, 263
Foote, M. B.	54, 127	Ratcliffe, D. Una	333
Forrest, Virginia	133	Rawnsley, W. F.	47, 145
Fraenkel, Michael	409	Raymond, Peter	171
Gard, Wayne	17, 329	Rees, Morwyth	11
Gilbertson, Belfrage	164	Romig, Edna Davies	373
Goodwin, Gwendoline	196, 274	Rosenthal, Ethel	29
Graves, Charles	426	Russell, Arthur	398
Green, Julia Boynton	5, 259, 371	Sackville, Lady Margaret	241, 294
Griffith, William	132	Sambrook, Joyce	171
Hamilton, M. J.	4, 178	Samms, Esther.	303
Harrison, E. Joyce	11	Schofield, M.	97
Heath, E. Crosby	240	Scollard, Clinton	76, 132, 299
Hickson, Elizabeth	123, 284	Simpson, Lilian E.	43

INDEX TO VOLUME XVIII

	PAGE		PAGE
Skeat, Bertha M. . . .	246	Taylor, Cyril G. . . .	28, 297
Smythe, Barbara E. . .	245	Tweedale, Judith Brundrett	8
Soper, J. M.	12	Vakil, J. J.	16
Speight, Rose E. . . .	50	Walker, Edith M. . . .	76
Stork, Charles Wharton	87, 264	Wills, A. W.	341
Strong, Aylmer	26	Willwyn, John.	374
Stuart-Young, J.M. . .	21, 89, 173	Wilson, A. Doris L. . .	15, 73, 110,
Sutherland, Helen B. G. .	152		300, 304

WINTER FAIRIES

I

WINTER, delicate night, and frost !
The vanished fairies are not lost
Beyond recall : I stand upon
Authentic lawns of Oberon !
The grass is crisp, the rime is spread,
And, kissed with moonlight where it clings,
Its cloudy sparkles wait the tread
That frets them into fairy-rings.
The sky is like a soul distraught
With moonlit dream and starry thought ;
And space is like a soul assoiled,
For frost with priestlike hands has toiled—
Its fingers counting, one by one,
The stars that are its rosary—
Till all is winnowed, purged, and won
To cold and stellar purity.

II

And suddenly there sounds a bruit,
More crystalline than lark's at morn,
And sweeter than the Attic flute
Ere thought had made its note forlorn—
The rally of an elfin horn.

And from the virtue of the ground,
And from the essence of the air—
The spell dissolved that held them bound,
The soul that is in sense made bare—
The fairies gather at the sound.

O summer midnights—though the kiss
May linger in their laden breast
Of suns that leave their hearts oppressed
With mere excess and cloying bliss—
Are not so magical as this.

For summer midnights are fulfilled
With beauty and its aching sense

THE POETRY REVIEW

Of blessedness ; but this intense
 And conscious life in them is stilled,
 And immanent intelligence.

III

Delicate dancing round and round,
 Clapping of hands with a silver sound,
 To time the pulse and dainty beat
 Of glowing wings and glancing feet,
 They meet, embrace, and break away,
 Then lightly pause to loose a call,
 And laughter mantles round their play
 Like vapour round a waterfall.
 They leap and hover, poise and dip,
 And flutter sweetly, and alight,
 Then pause to give an antic skip,
 And flash away in sudden flight.
 With pert defiance, face to face,
 They meet, encounter, and embrace,
 Then tumble glowing, wild and sweet,
 And scatter far in mock retreat.

IV

The souls of all the birds of spring,
 The secret of the cuckoo's call,
 The trance that buoys the swallow's wing,
 Their pensive evening twittering,
 And maddening morning madrigal—

The dewy dreams of summer flowers,
 And prayers of visionary eves,
 The sympathies of silver showers,
 And whispered wisdom of the leaves,
 The wistful light in woodland bowers—

The instinct of the squirrel's leap,
 The meaning of his sudden eye,
 The cool content of fish that lie
 In pools where water-lilies sleep,
 That change but with the changing sky—

What mind the teeming summers hid
In mere profusion of sweet things,
That weighed not on the open lid
Of eyes that woke to thoughtless springs,
Flies here with intellectual wings.

V

Essential beauty loosed at last
From forms that held it prisoned fast,
Discarnate from the dust, and free
From sense and visibility!
The veils that wrapped it plucked aside
By chaste and frosty hands, that dare
To loose the girdle of their bride,
And lay the soul of beauty bare.
The languor that the summer laid
On the ideal eyes of thought
Disperses now, and, undelayed,
I read the cryptic meanings wrought
In bloom of flowers, and dainty vein
That darkens through their skyey grain,
In speculation of wild eyes.
And birds' instinctive ecstasies.

VI

Alas for vision—who has power
To stay the hour beyond the hour,
Or check the fierce incontinence
Of time and shadows that devour,
And hold aside the veils of sense?

Where are the fairies—who shall find
A gleam that lingers from their wings?
What have the fairies left behind,
Memorial of their revellings,
Except the print of fairy-rings?

The glancing feet are gone, the gleams
Of elfin eyes and loosened hair;
The flash and splendour, stuff of dreams,

THE POETRY REVIEW

Have melted from the coarser air,
And left the midnight hard and bare.

O witchery of winter night,
O hardy, starry, keen accost—
Those meaning splendours quenched your light ;
And now, that revelation lost,
What are your stars, and what your frost ?

W. HANDLEY JONES.

A WINTER SUNSET

I GO my favourite way by the stark trees,
About their boles a thin blue light is shed
Drawn from the fairy frosts and icebound lake
And crisp is the breaking of leaves beneath my tread :
To the ploughed fields with their bare stretching level
Rising to meet the gradual back of a hill
Where Night bears low the honey coloured sky
My thoughts move quickly—quiver—and are still.

There where is promise of warmth and vital splendour
Should be His Feet enblazoned, sunbeam shod ;
So though the beauty falters comes a surety—
Over the skyline waits my love-lit God.

M. J. HAMILTON.

ISOLATION

EVEN the thought of beauty hurts
If there is none to share it,
And love may break the human heart
With one alone to bear it ;
Because in all the loveliest things
Created for our caring,
Is set the heart's desire and need
To be for ever sharing.

ROSA WAUGH HOBHOUSE.

A MEDITATION ON MIRTH

THE mighty urge that peopled earth made room
For cosmic drollery. The strife, the gloom
Attending man's slow upward push from slime
To the consummate seats of after time
Clamoured for light, the comic, to offset
Aeonic travail ; and great needs beget
Their ultimate satisfaction. Here and there
The predatory savage learned to wear
A look less fierce, less feral. Last, a smile
Dawned on his uncouth visage, haply while
He watched lithe jungle kittens at their play ;
Or marked the donkey's ears, and heard him bray ;
Or sketched on his cave wall (to pleasure us !)
The figure of a huge rhinoceros,
The clumsy barrel—impudent armoured snout—
Coarse, crumpled skin and small eye peering out—
A tiny tasselled tail ridiculously
Appended as a final pleasantry !

Or as through forests in pursuit he ran
He gazed astonished at the absurd toucan
Wearing a beak preposterous, like half
Of a banana ; and the initial laugh
Startled primeval woods.

Life lore attests
Nature delights in these occasional jests.
Worn with her giant labours, late or soon
She throws off care and plays the big buffoon.

So, we have ample sanction to be gay
At times, to put our grave affairs away,
Forget all worries, problems—and *just play*.

Later, in those far dim religious days
When grew vast temples for the prayer and praise
Of myriads, on their roofs quaint sculptured apes
Or bats close-neighbour'd lovely angel shapes.
By tonsured saints the gargoyles crouched and grinned,
Dog-headed, eagle-clawed, and dragon-finned.

Strange how such whimsical detail beguiles—
Adding fresh witchery to those splendid piles.

Nonsense is truest sense. Those who provide
Clean humour should be haloed, ranked beside
The great physicians, benefactors, priests.
What profit "flow of soul"—abundant "feasts
Of reason"—lacking wit's last sparkling touch?

Yet—would a crown upon his rough grey mane
Augment the glory of our one Mark Twain?
Or, would you be for choice an Emperor-seer—
Or the world's loved incomparable Lear?

Not lacking reverence, we may figure Mirth
A modern saviour of this woe-wracked earth,
And see through many a veil and rough disguise
The starry brilliance of her glorious eyes.

Upon amusement as upon a crutch
Lean countless weary, ill, despondent folk
Cheered by a quip and salvaged by a joke.
What wholesome morsels of content we munch
Standing spell-bound before immortal Punch!

Heaven save the dolt who never made a pun.
Heaven shrive the dense, phlegmatic, hopeless one
Who misses the Philosophy of Fun.

Vouchsafe us, Fate—this single boon we ask—
As comrade in our dull diurnal task
Jocund Thalia with her merry mask.
Under her faithful tutelage may we learn
On dreariest days a frolic face to turn;
When the blue devils gather and swarm thick
To sling a sally, launch a limerick;
To gain in kindly tolerance, nor look down
Too much on horse-play, "slap-stick," the poor clown.
To glimpse when luck declines or spirits sag
The deep eternal wisdom of the Wag.

JULIA BOYNTON GREEN.

REVELATION

I HAVE seen the scarlet flames of sunset glowing
On the everlasting snows ;
I have seen a thousand blue-eyed gentians growing
On the rocks and icy floes ;
I have seen the moon its silver light bestowing
On still waters desolate ;
I have seen the flooding cataracts go flowing
Down the hills in roaring spate ;
I have seen the death-pale hand of sunset sowing
A million stars upon the sky ;
I have seen the golden starlight fading, going
Where no flowers fade or die ;
I have seen the storm-winds rise and gather, blowing
Where no foot of man has trod ;
I have seen the white clouds slowly drift, not knowing
Whither ; have I not seen God ?

P. JOSHUA.

A PRAYER FOR JOY

GOD of the green fields and the careless hours,
Thou Who hast fashioned lovely, happy things,—
And lavished colours on the loneliest flowers,
And given the humblest bird the joy of wings ;

Thou Who hast painted this fair earth and sky
—A perfect Artist with a perfect Plan—
Touching the soul of such a thing as I,
And touching still the soul of every man ;

Give us again our lost and child-like mirth,
Forgotten joy in all that Thou hast made !
We have grown over wise ; we see this earth
Torn from Thy Presence, cold and unafraid.

Grant that we find our perfect joy in Thee,
And through Thee, in the joy of every man ;
That, serving both, we know true service free,
And happiness the end of Thy great Plan !

VERA I. ARLETT.

THE ROLLING STONE

WHEN I have trod the last dim road,
And dark more sweet than any day
Covers the whole brief episode
Of restless heart and dusty way—

Then of his ancient hostelry
Will Death, mine host, unbar the door,
And with swift welcome beckon me
Across the long-frequented floor.

And there will be no lamps alight,
No wine to quaff, no lips to kiss,
No song or story in the night—
Of all the world antithesis.

There in a quiet room between
Cool walls my limbs shall find a bed,
With a kind counterpane of green,
And a brown pillow for my head.

And I shall ask not song nor wine,
Nor the old hours of empty mirth,
But slumber, dreamless and divine,
After the turbulence of earth.

NANCY POLLOK.

EVENING SONG

NOW wakes the primrose, at the close of day,
Now spills her drowsy essence on the air,
Oxalis cups droop down the flag-stone way,
All languored by a noontide's passionate stare.
Now slips the legioned rook beneath grey skies,
Low croons a mother o'er her downy nest—
The petalled roses crave, with ghost-thin sighs,
Pale tears of pearl which drip from summer's eyes. . . .

So, through the darkness wander thou with me,
Now day hath closed her orbs of azure flame ;
The tangled breath of lilies and of thee
Flows o'er my spirit like a star-kissed sea.

JUDITH BRUNDRETT TWEEDALE.

FEBRUARY

SOFTLY over the sodden grass,
S pensively, shyly, doth she pass.
She glides through woods of birch and oak,
Closely wrapped in a dripping cloak
And white mist makes the clinging veil,
That hides her face so sweet and pale.

Lo ! suddenly the falling rain
Ceases ; the sun shines forth amain.
Her veil and cloak are cast away,
And earth may see her eyes of grey,
Her tender mouth, her brow so fair,
Crowned with a mass of jet-black hair,
Which every little playful gust
Powders with golden catkin dust.
Her robe is all of purest white,
Starred with the yellow aconite.
Against her heart her chill hands hold
Snowdrops, whose drooping bells enfold
A fragile calyx rimmed with green ;
And peeping shyly in between
The morning star of spring doth shine,
An early golden celandine !

She wanders on both far and wide,
Quickening life on every side :
Green cow-parsley in the ditches ;
Tiny ferns in sheltered niches ;
Feathery moss in woodland nooks ;
Floating weeds on the ponds and brooks.

The earth smiles as she passes by,
But ah, she is so shy, so shy !
And overwhelmed with sudden fright,
She hides beneath a quilt of white,
And spreads it o'er the wakened earth ;
Bids it forget its late rebirth,
Striving to deaden it with cold,
That it may sleep on as of old.

THE POETRY REVIEW

But soon the sun allays her fears ;
 Melts her quilt, and dries her tears.
 Sweeter and brighter than before,
 She coaxes earth awake once more !

K. M. MUNDAY.

DANCERS OF THE MIND

MY thoughts crowd, my thoughts press
 Unbidden on this weary brain ;
 Pass swift and numberless,
 A shadowy and noiseless train ;
 Dim shapes that flutter by,
 Elusive dancers of the mind,
 They taunt me, turn, pretend to fly,
 Now peer before, behind,
 Yet never give me peace or ease
 From their subtle tyrannies.

And when at last night folds the day
 To rest from its alarms,
 When fugitive I slip away
 To shelter in sleep's arms—
 Then even through her careful guard
 Tumultuous they break
 In a shower, many-starred
 Wingèd shapes that wake
 Half-memories of a long pursuit
 Of dancing figures, fleet and mute.

Not all the legions of my will
 Can hold their hordes at bay,
 Or make those myriad images still ;
 Yet strangely one quiet day
 A sudden touch will end their flight
 And hold them motionless,
 Transfixed in an eternal night :
 My thoughts that crowd, that press,
 At death shall be but dumb and blind
 Forgotten dancers of the mind.

D. F. RADFORD.

A SONG OF EVENING

HERE all things wait for you ; the singing river
Slides past the meadowsweet, and lingers, slow.
The gnats dance low in silver clouds, that quiver
In little evening winds that seaward go.

Shadows fall longer on the rustling heather ;
The gorse-flames flicker pale, grow small and far ;
The twilight deepens, till we wait together,
The gentle dusk, and I, and one bright star.

Come swiftly now, and by your pathway gladly
A moth may flutter ere his flower he sips ;
The briars' scent grow sweeter yet, and sadly
A dew-drenched honeysuckle brush your lips ;

But pause beside the stream, that in the glimmer
Of silver light that on the water lies
I still may catch, though shades grow greener, dimmer,
The changeless glory of your loving eyes.

MORWYTH REES.

THE CATHEDRAL

THE Cathedral is quiet and cool,
Like some great fantastic garden found in the strange
ways of sleep.
The glowing windows of orange and blue, on either side,
Are rich flowers in a border.
The smooth grey pillars are trees, solemn and tall ;
Their branches interlacing above bear strange fruit.
No birds build there, but carven saints watch with still faces
and folded wings.
From the organ music flows like the cool waters of a fountain,
Plashing among the shadows, spilt over the grey stones.
And men and women come from the heat of the sun and
the noise of the city
To rest their tired bodies and refresh their souls :
But few understand the beauty of the garden,

For it belongs most truly to those who walk there when
the fountain is silent.

When night has stolen the colours from the flowers,
And the trees loom very large and mysterious,
Then they return, those vanished ones, with noiseless feet
and bright hair,
To talk with the Gardener among the shadows.

E. JOYCE HARRISON.

UNSPENT

WHERE veiled lie the hollows
About the fair hillside,
And cloud on swift cloud follows,
Shadowing land and tide,
Where wave and driven foamflake
Darklier to darklier form . . .
I saw the exultant daybreak
Upsweep through mist and storm.

I saw at noon the meadows . . .
Flowing with silver light ;
And blue of woodland shadows
Merge into purple night :

Whence, fain from a flushed heaven,
The light, her giving done,
Unspent, draws back at even,
One with the undimmed sun.

I said :

The spirit . . . holding
Through drift of hopes and fears ;
Through life's fast-reft infolding,
And sweet and salt of tears ;
Through deeps with sound of flute-call
And heart-sob blent in flight . . .
Ageless, shall pass at nightfall,
Back to Unbroken Light.

J. MARION SOPER.

THE FAIR MAID OF SHETLAND

*OH did ye doff your garments gay
And did ye don the black?
There's many can say how I sailed away
But none how I came back!*

A rosy, laughing lass was I,
The toast of all the Isles;
I made foul weather with my frowns
And sunshine with my smiles.

Oh many a lad held down his head
To hide his woeful eyes,
When I set sail for Aberdeen
All in a red sunrise.

And many a lass her head did toss,
And danced with lighter shoon,
When I sailed away from the Scottish shore
All under a waning moon.

Oh we went down to Aberdeen
A bird that rides the breeze,
But we came back from Aberdeen
The sport of raging seas,

Battered and torn, a waif forlorn,
Past Buchan and Portsoy—
Dashed to our doom 'mid seething spume
'Neath the wizard heights of Hoy.

And still like one in a weary dream
That knows not Time nor Space,
Methought I must deck me for a ball
Where mine should be fairest face.

Yet I knew I was dancing a grimmer dance
By ness and voe and cave,
Flung up to the skies in leaping foam,
Whirled round where the eddies rave,

THE POETRY REVIEW

Sucked in at the doors of the dark sea-trolls,
Belched forth with the whitened wave.

“ Oh how shall mine be the fairest face
When the rocks have taken toll ?
And how shall mine be the fleetest foot
With never a bone in me whole ? ”

Then like one that wakes from a weary dream,
And laughs at the woe that's o'er,
Methought I stood safe in the lighted street
Beside my mother's door.

Oh I saw where she sat by a fading fire,
And wrung her hands and cried :
“ My lassie, oh why did I let ye go
To sail the treacherous tide ? ”

I flung my arms about her neck,
I nestled upon her knee :
“ Mother, dear mother, I'm home again,
And why should ye weep for me ? ”

Her tears flowed on ; her mournful eyes
Stared changeless into mine ;
The friends that came to comfort her
Gave neither sound nor sign.

In growing fear, in dire dismay
I heard the words she said—
And I knew that the doleful dream was true,
And that I was drowned and dead !

*Oh did ye don your garments gay,
And doff the outworn black ?
Ye could weep and pray when I sailed away,
But ye knew not when I came back.*

E. M. SMITH DAMPIER.

ONE WET DAY

RAIN falls.
Within the deep, green hedge
Willowwren unto moorhen calls,
While at the house-beam's edge
The swallow and her younglings wait
Listening to unseen streams singing from slate to slate.

Rain falls
Drenching dejected barley sheaves,
But on the apples, in and out the leaves,
Each raindrop weaves
Roundels and virelays day long.

Rain falls.
Man keeps his house,
Grudging the earth's carouse,
Till, swiftly pacing down the lane
Leaping brown ruts and tawny pools, grown wide
With the choked ditches' tide,
The postman comes, all unawares
Of leaves and apples with their rain-sweet airs,
And wakes my groaning knocker into laboured song.

A. DORIS L. WILSON.

THE BOURNE

I WOULD I knew where my grave shall be,
Upon what mound, beneath what tree ;
I would go and sit me there at whiles
When hope is low and life lacks smiles ;
When ways of men seem no more fair
My heart would find some solace there.
There where the grasses ripple and run
In the laugh of the wind and the warmth of the sun,
Beneath the great elms' breezy shade,
In some such spot shall I be laid ;
Where blue swallows tirelessly flit and gleam,
And near me a fern-shadowed stream
Sings murmuring through my dreamless hours.

Under black storms and sweet spring showers,
 Under the golden pomp of dawn,
 And skies of blue, and clouds of lawn ;
 Under the sunset's splendid fires
 Shall lie in stillness my desires ;
 Under the Plough, the infinite
 And starry peace of the choiring night.
 O then shall be no more awaking,
 Nor no more tears, nor no more aching
 Of a heart that had its meed of pain
 And would not live on earth again :
 Peace ever, then, as a soundless sea
 Shall flow through the darkness ceaselessly.

I would I knew where my grave shall lie ;
 For often, as evening dims the sky,
 I would sit me there beneath the tree
 And dream of the peace that awaiteth me.

HUGH MOORLAND.

A WOMAN'S THOUGHT

I WILL walk firmly yet and learn
 To look upon you with a stranger-eye
 When you pass by,
 Though now I hasten past like a wounded thing,
 And my eyes burn.

I know—though far away my rest—
 Strong Love shall one day roof me in with peace.
 This pain shall cease
 In a deeper hush than the quiet that I knew
 Upon your breast.

No more ; I will not backward gaze.
 If for one little bliss that is no more,
 I leave ajar my door,
 A storm blows in and wrecks the gathered calm
 Built up of many days.

J. J. VAKIL.

THE POETRY OF CARL SANDBURG

THE amazing popularity of Carl Sandburg's biography of Abraham Lincoln, which John Drinkwater calls "the first great American epic," has led many to re-examine the earlier work of this prairie singer. Sandburg's big frame and rough features, the grave lines of his face and the slow, mellow words of his talk—all suggest the poet of a more primitive age.

In America Sandburg is known from coast to coast as a peddler of folksongs. A minstrel of the middle ages who strolled into the industrial era by mistake, he enjoys as much as his audiences the songs which he sings to the accompaniment of his guitar. His repertoire includes nearly every cowboy song and negro song of the country, and he is never more pleased than when someone brings him an unfamiliar version.

Sandburg's own poems are the result of contact with life rather than with literature. In Galesburg, Illinois, where he was born in 1878, he delivered milk, worked in a brickyard, and shined boots in a barber's shop. In the West he harvested wheat in the fields of Kansas, and washed dishes in the hotels of several cities. "I was born on the prairie," he says, "and the milk of its wheat, the red of its clover, the eyes of its women, gave me a song and a slogan."

It was while serving as a private in Porto Rico, in the Spanish war, that he began to desire an education. Persuaded by a fellow soldier, he returned to Galesburg at the close of the war and entered Lombard College, graduating in 1902. After a number of short-time jobs, including newspaper work in Milwaukee and Chicago, he joined the staff of the Chicago *Daily News*, which he was to serve in various capacities for many years.

Here he began to write the poems which soon made him a national literary figure. In 1915 he published a collection of free verse which he titled ironically, "Chicago Poems," and which started a bitter literary controversy. Praised highly by many critics for its realism and its descriptive

colour, it was condemned severely by others for its slang and for its use of what they considered unpoetic subjects, such as slaughter-houses and slums. One of its poems had previously been excluded temporarily from the mails because of its attack on Billy Sunday, the evangelist, whom Sandburg called a "contemporary bunkshooter" and a hypocrite. John Burroughs described its author as leader of "the Reds of American literature," but the book had a phenomenal sale, and was translated into many languages.

In 1918, the year which saw the publication of his next book of poems, "Cornhuskers," Sandburg went to Sweden, his ancestral country, as a press correspondent. On his return to Chicago he reported for the *Daily News* the race riots of 1919, collecting his articles in a small volume. Two more books of poems, *Smoke and Steel* and *Slabs of the Sunburnt West*, appeared in 1920 and 1922, respectively.

His next two books grew out of the bed-time stories he told to his children at their suburban home in Elmhurst. In *Rootabaga Stories*, 1922, and *Rootabaga Pigeons*, 1923, he departed from the conventional themes of princes and fairies, and told of personages who, although no less imaginary, were nearer the actual experience of children. "The chances are," he told me one day, "that all my free verse will fade out from human memory, but two or three thousand years from now some of the *Rootabaga* stories will still be kicking along. Except for the tales of Paul Bunyan, these are almost the first kid stories without princes and princesses."

The poet then turned his attention to writing a biography of Abraham Lincoln, to the time of his inauguration. "I wanted to take Lincoln away from the religious bigots and the professional politicians," he said, "and restore him to the common people to whom he belongs." This two-volume work, for which he had been gathering material for more than thirty years, was published early in 1926, and gained more attention—and more favourable attention—than any of his earlier works.

Sandburg in his biography tore away the halos that

Fourth of July orators had hung on Lincoln, and uncovered the lanky wrestler who was always hungry for book learning. In breaking off his narrative with Lincoln's inauguration as President, he emphasised what the tall rail-splitter had done before he went to Washington. "I wanted to show that this was not just a strange man who performed amazingly well for four years," Sandburg told me, "but that his qualities, born of the prairie soil, were manifested before he left Illinois."

Turning again to poetry, Sandburg next prepared a collection of American folksongs. Meanwhile his earlier work had been gaining considerable attention abroad. Rebecca West had edited a book of his poems for publication in England, and Leon Bazalgette had translated many of his poems and stories into French, and had begun translation of the Lincoln biography.

Even though his *Rootabaga* stories for children represent an original contribution to American folklore, and lie especially near the author's heart, Sandburg's poems probably will endure longer. They are the fruit of his wanderings through the country, in which he uncovered the roots of pioneer life. He sees life from the viewpoint of the man in the street, and speaks his language.

He stands up for the under-dog, whose suffering he knows, and strikes hard at the "millionaire." When he sees poor Mrs. Gabrielle Giovannitti who "comes down Peoria street every morning at nine o'clock with kindling wood piled on top of her head, her eyes looking straight ahead to find a way for her old feet," and knows that her daughter-in-law, widowed by a tunnel explosion, "works ten hours a day, sometimes twelve, picking onions for Jasper on the Bowmanville road," for starvation wages, he cannot help contrasting her with the skinflint Jasper who "belongs to an Episcopal church in Ravenswood and on certain Sundays enjoys chanting the Nicene creed with his daughters on each side of him joining their voices with his." The "perfumed sorrow" over the dead child of a rich man reminds him bitterly of the "stockyards hunky" who, with equal grief, cries "over the pinched face almost at peace

in the white box " that cost him a week's wages, and who on the day after the funeral " goes back to his job sweeping blood off the floor at a dollar seventy cents a day."

Yet these sociological thrusts constitute only a portion of his poems. Sandburg is essentially a singer; he loves most of all to sing of the prairie land that bore him. "O prairie mother, I am one of your boys. I have loved the prairie with a heart shot full of pain over love." Even the city gives him material for lyrics. He sees Chicago as "hog butcher for the world" and yet happy; he finds poetry in "a Jew fish crier down on Maxwell Street with a voice like a north wind blowing over corn stubble in January."

Sometimes he writes little pictures that stick in the memory—like this description of a Chicago fog:

The fog comes
on little cat feet.

It sits looking
over harbor and city
on silent haunches
and then moves on.

Sandburg is a bit mellower now, but there is still iron in his voice on occasion. He chuckles sometimes when he recalls that his attack on Billy Sunday, once considered so profane, is now included in a standard collection of the world's great religious poetry. There are many who seek the dingy office he still occupies at the *Daily News*, and those who find him there do not easily forget the grey smile of his mobile face or the queer quips of his speech. As I was leaving with him one day he turned back to the girl who shares his office, as if he had forgotten something. "I'll be back when I return," he said.

WAYNE GARD.

TO A WRITER OF VERS LIBRE

O F old you merely freed your verse
From Art's restraints, but now, in new—
And uglier—fashion, do still worse,
Discarding rhyme and reason too.

H. S. MILLER.

THE HOLY DARK

NIGHT SCENES FROM THE POETS

A DETACHMENT from the major interests of the crowd marks the real poet; and in no other phase of Nature is he so much at home as in moonlight and starshine. "The holy dark" is for him symbol of all that is gentle, melancholy and appealing. In the deep of night he is most in tune with himself.

Ever since Homer sang on the moonlit shores of Troy, Night has spelled romance and mystery. Beneath the quiet dome of Cloudland, the dreamer is able to create a fairyland of his own. For it is a wonderful thought that the same moon which shines upon the earth to-day has so shone down during millions of years—upon happy homes where its light has added one more blessing to loving hearts; upon hatred and malice and jealousy; upon *every* aspect of Good and Evil; and yet has always appeared calm, serene, and seemingly indifferent to Man's mysterious destiny.

Shakespeare once bitterly referred to "the jaws of darkness"; but his moonlit scenes in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* remain unforgettably beautiful. We will always think of the bank

. . . whereon the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,

as bathed in moon-mist. For that "exposition of sleep" that came over the senses of Bottom becomes changed for us into a thrillingly warm sense of Beauty. We listen entranced to the honeyed words of the Grecian lovers, while the stars dance exultingly overhead.

Shakespeare was a past master in the use of environment as a means of portraying character. The venom and malignity of Iago, and the jealousy and despair of Othello are both brought to their legitimate crises in the darkness.

That poignant cry, "Put out the light, and then—put out the light!" pierces to our very soul.

Shakespeare, however, has never surpassed the moonlight scene in *The Merchant of Venice*, where Lorenzo and

Jessica are awaiting the arrival of Portia and Bassanio, after the trial. Lorenzo is the speaker :—

The moon shines bright ; in such a night as this,
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees,
And they did make no noise, in such a night
Troilus, methinks, mounted the Trojan walls,
And sighed his soul toward the Grecian tents
Where Cressid lay that night.

And then the passion rises to this clear note of ecstasy—

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank !
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears ; soft stillness, and the night,
Become the touches of sweet harmony. . . .

From Shakespeare we pass to Scott, whose battle-fields are only occasionally bathed with the pitying glory of moonlight. In descriptive skill we find him at his fullest note of power in *Marmion*. It is in the darkness that

. . . the lost battle
Borne down by the flying ;
Where mingles war's rattle
With groans of the dying,

is portrayed with such indelible skill of drawing and vividness of colour. And *Melrose Abbey* shows us the more benignant side of the night—

If thou wouldst view fair Melrose aright,
Go visit it by the pale moonlight :
For the gay beams of brightsome day
Gild but to flout the ruins gray.
When the broken arches are black in night,
And each shafted oriel glimmers white ;
When the cold light's uncertain shower
Streams on the ruined central tower ;
When buttress and buttress alternately
Seem framed of ebony and ivory. . . .

This is splendid picture-presentation ; and we find the same power in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* :—

The moon on the east oriel shone
 Through slender shafts of shapely stone,
 By foliated tracery combined ;
 Thou wouldst have thought a fairy's hand !

Byron might be called a poet by right of his handling of the Night *leit motif* alone. In no other dreamer, not excepting Shakespeare himself, is there such an abundance of memory-haunting material—

It is the hour when from the boughs
 The nightingale's high note is heard ;
 It is the hour when lovers' vows
 Seem sweet in every whispered word ;
 And gentle winds, and waters near,
 Make music to the lonely ear. . . .

This combined effect of moonlight and starshine lends unsurpassable splendour to lines of this calibre : “Gone, glimmering through the dream of things that were,” or “The dome of Thought, the palace of the Soul !”

In *The Siege of Corinth* we discover a scene that cannot be forgotten by any lover of the beautiful. There has been throughout the day the most savage butchery, and all around stands desolation and horror. But the moon steals forth, and the world seems bathed in sudden glory :—

'Tis midnight ; on the mountains brown
 The cold round moon shines deeply down ;
 Blue roll the waters, blue the sky
 Spreads like an ocean hung on high,
 Bespangled with those isles of light,
 So wildly, spiritually bright ;
 Who ever gazed upon them shining
 And turned to earth without repining,
 Nor wished for wings to flee away,
 And mix with their eternal ray ?

There is, by contrast with Byron, something crystalline, metallic, monotonously austere, in Milton's handling of the midnight skies—

. . . Now glowed the firmament
 With living sapphires : Hesperus that led

THE POETRY REVIEW

The starry host, rose brightest, till the moon,
 Rising in clouded majesty, at length
 Apparent queen, unveiled her peerless light,
 And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.

Modern poets are very little influenced by their increased scientific knowledge. The stars are still unchangeably mystical, and the moon is for ever the Night's Queen. John Freeman has a splendid little lyric, which opens with the words—

It was the lovely moon—she lifted
 Slowly her white brow among
 Bronze cloud-waves that ebbed and drifted
 Faintly, faintlier afar . . .

William H. Davies addresses Night's Monarch in the heart-cry, "Thy beauty haunts me heart and soul;" and goes on to declare that he is "like the child that cries aloud to own thy light"; but ends his song of yearning with the proud assertion that

Who worships thee till music fails
 Is greater than thy nightingales!

It was left for Robert Graves to lend personalities to the stars of Gemelli and the Pleiads. No child could resist a poem which starts away on this magical strain:—

"Are you awake, Gemelli,
 This frosty night?"
 "We'll be awake till reveille,
 Which is Sunrise," say the Gemelli,
 "It's no good trying to go to sleep:
 If there's wine to be got we'll drink it deep
 But rest is hopeless to-night,
 But rest is hopeless to-night!"

And it was Maurice Hewlett who coined the words which make the title of our article:—

Deep, deep I lie as any dead,
 Save my breath comes and goes;
 The holy dark is like a bed
 With violet curtains close.

And while enfolded I lie there
 Until the dawn of day,
 My body is the prisoner,
 My soul slips out to play.

A-tiptoe on the window-sill
 He listens like a mouse,
 The calling wind blows from the hill
 And circles round the house.

If we were to quote from Wordsworth, Keats, Morris, Kingsley, and Longfellow, our task would be almost endless. One passage might be quoted from the American poet :—

Soon she extinguished her lamp, for the mellow and radiant moon-
 light
 Streamed through the windows, and lighted the room, till the heart
 of the maiden
 Swelled and obeyed its power, like the tremulous tides of the ocean.

Shelley's *I Arise from Dreams of Thee* ! is quintessentially a song of the darkness—full of the passionate throb of heart desire felt by all healthy humans,

When the winds are breathing low,
 And the stars are shining bright.

But no other description gives a more glowing feeling of what a “night of stars and night of love” may mean to the aching soul of a lover than this :—

Good night ? Ah ! no : the hour is ill
 Which severs those it should unite ;
 Let us remain together still,
 Then it will be *good* night !

How can I call the lone night good,
 Though thy sweet wishes wing its flight ?
 Be it not said, thought, understood,
 Then it will be—*good* night !

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

THE POETRY OF LADY MARGARET SACKVILLE

THE publication of a revised edition of Lady Margaret Sackville's "Collected Dramas" (*Hildris: Bertrud*)—Allen and Unwin, 5s.—may be gladly greeted by everyone in whom a lyric personality can find response and justify an appreciation of the author's distinguished work. For spontaneity is Lady Margaret Sackville's keynote; reflection and experience, though present always, do not impair her force. Echoes of an elemental onrush, of an elemental plaintiveness, are caught again and again in her poetic work.

Ballads voice the wild tradition of the soil. It is strange and grateful to find this latter wed, as it is in so much of Lady Margaret's work, to the seemingly antagonistic tradition of restraint, of the scrupulous restraint dear to the austere norm we call the Classical. To meet such a tradition in an age when a line of far less resistance in poetic form is too frequently an avenue to praise is in itself refreshing; to find it often interposed with high romantic utterance is an event. Her lyricism in a classic livery should alone suffice to clear the poet of the recent suggestion of Mr. Charles Graves* that her "sympathies" are "limited." Harp notes can be expected in a Doric precinct, strands of folk-music in an English pastoral symphony, as Vaughan-Williams has convinced hundreds of pilgrims lately drawn to Worcester for the Three Choirs Festival. However exquisite such congruities may become, their sustainers might perhaps be taxed with sympathetic limitation. But successfully to carry through the improbable illusion of a *Trovatore's* zither strung beneath an Ionic architrave is hardly an indication that the composer's contacts are at fault.

For there enters, furthermore, into Lady Margaret Sackville's scope of mood an element two recent students of her work have respectively referred to as "Mediæval," with a capital M, and "pseudo-mediæval" with a small one. Whichever be the apter style, the atmospheric tendency

* *The Scots Magazine*, September 1926.

it covers must receive its due according to the critic's taste in any appreciation of her verse. To one it may well suggest the mystery and chiaroscuro of a Gothic fane or palace, some dim-lit aisle in Chartres or arrased corridor of Blois; to another it may seem but a vague background for the moods of personages who, divorced from past or future, are mainly interested in the momentary phases of their own minds. The latter impression has just this amount of justification: that the characters in Lady Margaret Sackville's poetic plays are never so much component units engaged in bringing about a climax or dénouement as they are passionate vehicles of private grievances told to their creator with the fiercest passion. Thus the persons of her *Bertrud* and *Hildris* perhaps may seem to the champion of strictly dramatic values lacking in the particular kind of probability his standards postulate. But to the layman with a heart and ear it will be evident that whatever they may lack in "Universality" *sub specie dramatis* they fully render as mouthpieces of a widely sympathetic lyric sense. Thus considered, they are very representative and human. And if a study of them opens the interesting question of the precise amount of strict dramatic virtue that suits a lyric sequence written as a play, no student of literature with a mind to cope with his subject's problems will think the worse of them for that. "Aloof" is another term Mr. Charles Graves has applied to some of Lady Margaret Sackville's poetic work. The epithet is again, no doubt, bound up with some such dramatic criterion as has just been suggested.

But it is seemlier to listen to the voices she herself evokes. Their utterance keeps faith with intimate life as many must have known it. Anger and Laughter and Passion, these, the chief motifs of *Hildris the Queen*, are not themes "remote." But if one's response to life is too vigorous for lyricism thus presented, let him turn from the poetic plays of Lady Margaret Sackville to those poems in which she is identified with her own experience. Few people, probably, are fond of war: their fulfilment of its stern behests need nowise be impaired because they speak their mind about it.

In the moment of their doing so, they will hardly be "remote" from wide experience.

In her forcible and telling poems in this regard, most notably in *The Pageant of War*, Lady Margaret Sackville will give them an impassioned lead; the chords she touches vibrate to-day in many a memory and imagination. So too with a number of her rhythmic contacts with much experience of a less harrowing kind. Their sound and substance have intensified too many an enthusiasm to make it likely that warmths yet to be born will find them cold.

Technical analysis has here been outruled; it may be best reserved for a generation that may no longer meet Lady Margaret Sackville's technique in the convincing life her own speaking voice imparts to it. But if anyone shall say that the personality that has evoked *Hildris the Queen*, *Columbine in Cricklebuy*, *Bertrud* and *Tereus*, and the *Pageant of War*, the *Travelling Companions*, the *Epitaphs* and *Mr. Percy Pendergast*, of truthful memory, is limited in sympathies—well, let his insatiability be anathema in the name of all sweet reasonableness.

AYLMER STRONG.

FINIS

DARKNESS, be my cloak;
And wind, my cry;
Trees, with my dead dreams rock,
Rain, weep as I
Who shall not weep agen
In the world of men.

Heaven, broken—obscure,
Take thou my rhymes.
I knock on no man's door;
My spirit climbs
Alone, even as that wan
Wild traveller, the moon.

CYRIL G. TAYLOR.

MODERN PORTUGUESE POETRY

THE great Portuguese literary revival of the nineteenth century was assisted by the era of peaceful constitutional government which succeeded the reign of Queen Maria de Gloria. This queen died in 1853, soon after the revision of the parliamentary charter, and the people, weary of civil war and political upheaval, settled down with relief to a period of prosperity. King Luis (1861-1889), the predecessor of King Carlos, set an admirable example by his encouragement of literature. With considerable literary acumen he translated several plays of Shakespeare into Portuguese, and extended his patronage to men of letters with judgment and foresight.

António Feliciano de Castilho (1800-1875) was a staunch supporter of Romanticism,* and his writings are distinguished by smoothness of style and beauty of language. Some of his best known works are *A Primavera*, *Amor e Melancholia* and *Extravanças Poéticas*. He revealed his sympathy with the classics by his translations of Ovid, Anacreon and Virgil, and excelled in his renderings into Portuguese of the plays of Molière, Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* and Goethe's *Faust*. Despite his blindness, Castilho was a prolific writer, and the complete edition of his prose and poetry, published under the supervision of his son, between the years 1903 and 1910, comprises eighty volumes. A great patriot, Castilho laboured hard and successfully for the establishment of an efficient method of national education in Portugal. He celebrated the past grandeur of his fatherland in his creative work and served, moreover, as a source of inspiration to the younger poets of his day.

In 1848 there appeared, at Coimbra, *O Trovador*, containing collections of verse by brilliant students, who were destined to exercise far-reaching influence over the trend of Portuguese poetry. This first publication of the new Coimbra group aroused the enthusiasm of Castilho, who hailed its authors as his literary successors, and prophesied that *O Trovador* would go down to posterity because "it

* See p. 422, Vol. XVII, THE POETRY REVIEW.

carries the cross as a device upon its breast and wears the national colours." ("Porque traz no peito como devisa a cruz, e traja as côres nacionais.")

In conjunction with his colleagues, the leader of *O Trovador*, João de Lemos (1819-1890), was a disciple of the Romantic school, and his *Cancioneiro* (1857-1867), comprising the three volumes—*Flores e Amores*, *Religião e Pátria*, *Impressões e Recordações*—contains many lines of exquisite beauty. One of his most popular compositions was, and still is, *A Lua de Londres*, of which an extract is cited below :

Tu vens, ó lua, tu deixas
 Talvez ha pouco o paiz
 Onde do bosque as madeixas
 Já tem um floreo matiz,
 Amaste do ar a doçura,
 Do azul céu a formosura
 Das agoas o suspirar,
 Como has de agora entre gelos
 Dardejar teus raios bellos
 Fumo e nevoa aqui amar ?

O Moon, who shin'st above the town,
 Thou dost recall my country dear,
 Sweet Cintra's glades and grassy down,
 And Lusitania's atmosphere,
 And coolness after summer heats ;
 Such memories thou hast for me
 That even London's gloomy streets
 Are beautified by thee.

(Free English transcription by F. M. B. Rosenthal.)

In 1851 the publication of *O Novo Travador* initiated the second phase of the Coimbra movement, and stimulated the talent of A. A. Soares de Passos (1826-1860). Since the year 1537, when John III transferred the seat of the university from Lisbon to Coimbra, the latter city has occupied a unique position in the history of Portuguese literature. It still retains many features which recall the life of the French universities of the fourteenth century, and its mediæval atmosphere has aroused the creative

power of many young poets. With his natural reserve, due in part to ill-health, Soares de Passos regarded poetry as a refuge from the clash of that boisterous outside world which jarred upon his highly strung nervous system. In 1856 there appeared a small collection of his poems, which immediately aroused the interest and admiration of lovers of verse, and won for him the praise of no less a celebrity than Alexandre Herculano (1810-1879), sometimes described as the "Walter Scott of Portugal." Herculano was the author of several powerful historical novels and a monumental history of Portugal; in his youth he had devoted much time to poetry, and was a competent and constructive critic whose opinion carried weight. He proclaimed that the mantle of Almeida Garrett had fallen upon the shoulders of Soares de Passos. Unfortunately, in the second half of the last century, the premature death of the young poet, at the age of 34, robbed Portugal of one of her most promising men of letters. The tendency to melancholia of Soares de Passos, which was increased by physical debility, influenced much of his poetry, and is apparent in the fragment of *Consolação* given below :

A vida é triste : no mundo
 Soffremos até morrer ;
 Mas, Senhor, quem sonda a fundo
 Mystérios do teu poder ?
 A vida é triste, mas breve ;
 E o futuro que se eleva,
 Eterno, immenso ha de ser.

Our life is sad, for in this world of woe,
 We suffer many ills ere death's release,
 Yet Lord ! No mortal can thy Mercy know
 Until his earthly pilgrimage shall cease.
 We linger briefly here, but through the night
 The rising star of hope sends forth a ray,
 The future dawns in Heaven's transcendent light,
 And breaks Eternal Day.

(Free English transcription by F. M. B. Rosenthal.)

After the perusal of Laplace's *Système du Monde*, Soares

de Passos wrote *O Firmamento*, which ranks amongst his finest work and reveals a philosophy akin to that of the English Lake Poets :

Gloria a Deus ! eis aberto o livro immenso,
 O livro do infinito,
 Onde em mil letras de fulgor intenso
 Seu nome adoro escripto.
 Eis do seu tabernaculo corrida
 Uma ponta do véo mysterioso :
 Desprende as azas retomando a vida,
 Alma que anceias pelo eterno gôso !

Glory to God ! His Sacred Name
 In star-writ splendour spans the sky
 The firmament declares His Fame
 And Power for all Eternity.
 The Soul from out its prison cell
 To heavenly mansions yearns to rise,
 Within the Mystic Veil to dwell,
 To wander midst the skies.

Estrellas, que brilhaes n'essas moradas,
 Quaes são os vossos destinos !
 Vós sois, vós sois as lampadas sagradas
 De seus umbraes divinos.
 Pullulando do seio omnipotente,
 E sumidas por fim na eternidade,
 Sois as faiscas do seu carro ardente
 Ao rolar através da immensidade.

O Stars that shine upon us here
 And mortal destinies portray ;
 O Holy Lamps that now appear
 Upon the grand celestial way :
 Sparks from the Sacred Chariot thrown
 In myriad hosts to multiply,
 To mingle in the starry zone,
 To fade, to set, to die.

(Free English transcription by F. M. B. Rosenthal.)

In common with many of his countrymen, Soares de Passos possessed remarkable linguistic talents. He trans-

lated portions of Ossian into Portuguese, faithfully reproducing the spirit of the original, and his *Poesias* (Porto 1925), edited by Theophilo Braga, contain versions of the *Invocation to the Sun* ("A Sol"), from Carthou, and the *First Canto of Fingal*, in addition to songs of Heine, transcribed from the German.

Bulhão Pato (1829-1912) is regarded as the last typical Romanticist amongst Portuguese poets, and his death severed one of the final links between Almeida Garrett's* work and that of twentieth century writers. Bulhão Pato will go down to posterity as the author of many charming lyrics published in his *Canções da tarde*, *Flores agrestes*, etc.

Owing to limitations of space, the names of many contemporary Portuguese poets must perforce be omitted from this article. Their number becomes legion when Brazilian writers are taken into account, and it seems probable that in the near future the poets of the South American Republic will become a vital element in the Portuguese world of letters, and lend to it fresh vigour.

Gonçalves Crespo (1846-1883), born in Brazil of Portuguese parents, enriched the literature of his fatherland by his *Miniaturas* (1870) and *Noturnos* (1882). He was a contemporary of Guerra Junqueiro, born in 1850, one of the most arresting figures in the gallery of modern Portuguese poets. Junqueiro's sympathy with the masses of suffering humanity is visible throughout his *Finis Pátriae*. His list of works includes several patriotic masterpieces such as *Pátria*, *Heras de Combate*, etc. A certain vein of realism did not mar his lyrical gifts, and his *Poesias Dispersas* (Porto 1920), contain a variety of poems illustrating his breadth of vision. Verses such as those which form the *Hino de Algum Dia* are imbued with a healthy optimism which augurs well for the future of Portugal. The bibliographical notes respecting this poem prove that the author's confidence in the future remained undimmed, despite many disappointments. It reads as follows: "Foi escrito cerca

* See p. 423, Vol. XVII, THE POETRY REVIEW.

de 30 anos o *Hino d'Algun Dia*, e a alvorada de glória, o dia de paz d'amor e de justiça não chegou ainda. Mas não descreio da minha Pátria. Ao cabo d'esta noite sinistra, depois d'uma longa e dura expiação, fatal e necessária, a aleluia heróica de Portugal brotará das almas. Nun' Alvares e Camões hão de reviver." ("The *Hymn of Someday* was written about thirty years ago, and the dawn of glory, the day of loving peace and justice have not yet arrived. But I do not lose faith in my country. At the end of this sinister night, after long, hard, fatal and necessary expiation, the heroic alleluia of Portugal will burst forth from the souls of her people. Then Alvares and Camões must live again.")

The following verse occurs twice in the *Hino d'Algun Dia* :—

O gala canta, o gala canto
Rompe a manhã . . . vibra un clarim . . .
Justiça eterna ! aurora santa,
Teu disco d'oiro se alevanta
Ao longe . . . enfim !

Salute the morn with hymns of praise,
Your trumpets sound, your anthems raise,
The day of Truth is born ;
To end the baneful gloom of years
The Golden Disc of Heaven appears,
And night gives place to dawn.

(Free English transcription by F. M. B. Rosenthal.)

The preceding remarks respecting modern poets indicate that to-day poetry is a living force in Portugal, despite the political agitation which rends the country with disastrous frequency. It is unfortunate that little modern Portuguese verse is known to the majority of readers outside the land of its origin. Anyone acquainted with Latin, Italian or Spanish will find Portuguese easy to understand, and the language, which is both majestic and harmonious, is deserving of study by lovers of poetry.

Publishers in Lisbon, Porto and Coimbra are producing, in attractive and portable form, many volumes of contem-

porary verse which prove the authors to be worthy descendants of their great predecessors. These poets gaze with confidence into the mirror of the future, and are inspired by the memories of the past glory of their fatherland.

ETHEL ROSENTHAL.

ETHEL POPE.

THE WOODLAND BUSH

I PULLED the honeysuckle flowers,
 I Snapt bough on bough,
 And all the while my heart cried out
 "What use is there for beauty now" ?
 And all the while my tears fell fast,
 Yet still I plucked scarce knowing how.
 As I had found the woodland bush
 I left it fair,
 And all its crown of lifted flowers
 Flung sweetness on the shadowed air ;
 My hand was wiser than my heart
 In the presence of despair.

ROSA WAUGH HOBHOUSE.

THE BRONZE BOY

MORE lithe than yours, his bronze limbs curve and
 gleam
 Above the lilies. Tragedy and dream
 Have made the secret smile upon his lips ;
 A secret smile as infinitely wise
 As only such eternal youth can seem.
 And more than you or I have ever found
 In movement and the laughter of the free ;
 Immutable, he has discovered . . . drowned
 With the lilies in a dark liquidity.
 He has solved the enigma. But no answer slips
 From the slanted lids down-dropped to hide the eyes
 Where lies

Eclipse.

MARION ALLISON.

SAND CASTLES

TOWERS and turrets builded high
Galleries and ramparts wide
Builded all to pass away
At the turning of the tide.

Shingles, shell and silver sand
Twinkling on the castle's side,
Builded all to pass away
At the turning of the tide.

Homeward go and turn away
From the waves and waterside,
Build again another day
At the turning of the tide.

JOSE FIELDING.

"THE NIGHT THAT COVERS ME"

THE dawn ? Nay, mothering night, go not so soon !
Still hold me close—a little longer day !
I dread the stark publicity of say,
The peering, staring insolence of noon.

Darkness and solitude ! O what a boon
To creep beneath their shelter, as a stray
And wounded creature dumbly steals away
Into the covert, there to die alone.

Day, unrelenting, comes ; the window-pane
Glimmers with dawn. To some it brings new life,
Who all night long have pain or sorrow borne ;
To me—renewal of the endless strife !
Once more my tired nerves must take the strain,
And brace themselves to meet another morn.

HENRY MARTIN.

AN AMERICAN LETTER :

THE FORMS OF POETRY

IT is a delight to have a present-day text-book of *The Forms of Poetry* (Harcourt, Brace and Co.) in the language and enthusiasms of a present-day poet, Mr. Louis Untermeyer. It is as if we had thus with us a person who explains any ordinary moment where the Muse drapes a cloud too obscurely but who explains gaily here, seriously there, definitely everywhere, holding to us and with us the mood of our first thought. This Handbook of Poetic Terms also gives a brief outline of English Poetry, as well as the usual summarised bibliography and index of authors quoted.

The "terms" are arranged alphabetically. Here is a retired place where such intimacies as cliché, for instance, are discussed. We knew "it isn't done!" but after his exposal it is as if the Lord High Chancellor in *Iolanthe* had said "I need say no more!" For he quotes Jewell Martin, a youngster in the Lincoln High School in New York City, subjected to poetic taboos for a gruelling half-hour. This is her retort courteous:—

B.C. (Before Cliche)

Morning

I watched a fluffy cloud drift by
Across the boundless blue of sky
And saw the sun's rays, molten gold,
Upon the dewy earth unfold.

Evening

I felt my fettered soul uplift
Before the rosy sunset drift
And in the hazy blue afar
I saw the gleaming evening star.

A.D. (After Discovering-'em)

Morning

I saw the sun with battered face
Trying to warm the human race;
I watched a sodden cloud limp by
Like some discouraged custard pie.

Evening

The sleepy sun in flannels red
Went yawning to its Western bed;
I saw one shivering small star
No brighter than our dishpans are.

There lies cliché—*requiescat in pace!* We pass on, not realising this to be a text-book, into Poetic Form. Here, he illustrates each figure in some memorable fashion—none too charily. And there is no sudden element of discipline or erudition. He does not alter the trend of thought. He cites a poem or develops an idea in his definition which should quicken rather than halt the flow of imagination. I cannot state this too strongly. It is the high value of the book.

When Mr. Untermeyer compasses poetic history, we enjoy a poet with an orderly mind. For he makes the periods pass pageant-like across the pages, set with their natural poetic outgrowth. It shows Spenser's interest in Virgil and other Latin classics which so influenced Elizabethan England. His two great lyrical poems, the "Epithalamion" and "Prothalamion," are like "a duet of flutes and little bells." (Let him who always scans a recital programme for the music of Couperin, consider well this quotation.)

There have been hundreds of writers whose appreciations of Shakespeare and his time have led them into the high places, perhaps intoning above a cloud; or into dim museums, lovingly, reverently passing through tome on tome (quite frequently we watch their thumb); or in the sanctified historical setting, summoning things unseen about their persons. So it is refreshing to read this "downright" paragraph by one who has undoubtedly recovered his equilibrium after much that these other faithful have undergone.

"If any one characteristic predominates, it is a universal understanding, an almost cosmic sympathy, which makes him ageless. He writes with equal intimacy of men of all ranks, from kings to clowns, from lovers to grave-diggers. He makes equally real (and eternally modern) the romantic fourteen-year-old Juliet and the ardent young feminist Portia. His plays—nearly forty—include the lightest comedies, the darkest tragedies and the most brilliantly panoramic histories that have ever appeared on any stage.

"If Shakespeare's premier position as dramatist is undisputed, his importance as a poet is scarcely less. He filled every form—from an orchestral blank verse to the most flutelike lyric—with magic and finality. His sonnets, which number among the greatest in the language, constitute one of the most revealing autobiographical fragments of which we have any record. His songs, which have been set to music a thousand times, are the very breath of ecstasy. When to these are added his embodiment of every passion, every phase of human thought, it becomes plain that Shakespeare did not merely create a literature—he created a world."

When Mr. Untermeyer gives his attention to American poetry, his sensitiveness to the personality and taste which, in individual streams, determine the reaches of modern art and appreciation, is important. Among a representative group of authors, he gives scant but precise diagnosis.

Amy Lowell "disclosed a command of the lacquered phrase, an ability to capture the minute disturbances of light and motion, an uncanny power of impelling, curbing and quickening a movement"; Conrad Aiken, "subtle and plangent music"; Ezra Pound, "whose early poems have a strange beauty and whose later work is sunk in theory"; Maxwell Bodenheim, "whose acrobatic ironies descend obliquely from Euphues."

If we do not wholly agree with Mr. Untermeyer, it is the way with personal literary reactions. As a Vermonter bordering on New Hampshire, I have yet to meet a fellow-countryman of Robert Frost who can sufficiently scatter the Frost from his writings as to know he is "local to the core," but many of us worship him as a rare and gifted spirit, a poet whose horizons are far wider than the confining matter of his poems, hence his detachment. Also, far too little was said regarding Marianne Moore. Having mentioned her at all he should have accepted his responsibility. Some might seek her out expecting what is generally known as "poetry." I would say of her that she effects the mosaic in poetry—ideas chipped and fitted to realise a form and a spirit and a vision. But, in "Observations," for instance, each figure reacts to the artist in Miss Moore—the judicial, sincere designer, and her first appeal is intellectual. She has a nice facility with cadences which are reminiscent of the best in Whitman. But whereas Whitman writes in fitful, leaping, natural fire that alters with his differing lines, Miss Moore conveys a hard, opalescent, steady gleam, whatever her idea encounters. Many a time her matter is the better for this, more often not. So arises the question "What is poetry?" This survey entitled *The Forms of Poetry* demonstrates as answer much, but, more important still, carries the appreciative thought far into poetry reading with perspective and sympathy and expectation.

H. HARTNESS FLANDERS.

SPENSER IN FRENCH EYES.

Foreign criticism of an English author has one great advantage: it tends to set him in his place in international history. M. Emile Legouis's study of Spenser (Dent, 6s.) explains the poet as a figure in the literary renaissance, the spiritual son of Ariosto (not of Chaucer, despite his warm tribute to the dead "Tityrus"), and the

precursor of Milton. From the "Italian Voluptuary" he took his love of marvellous adventure and of splendid pageantry, two passions which were reinforced by personal contact with a gorgeous and intellectual court life on the one hand and the romantic wilderness of Ireland on the other. His debt to the plastic arts and the newly-invented Mask are particularly obvious. Into his picturesque material he infused a Platonic spirit, pure and lovely, but rather tepid and ineffectual. His moral ideas are trite, and would be tedious but for the fact that they lose themselves in the sweet, sensuous meshes of his verse. By the music of his beautiful cadences he stands or falls. He can rise no nearer to the humanity of Chaucer and Shakespeare than to the "high seriousness" of Milton.

All this is clearly argued throughout the book and summed up in the closing paragraph. The chapter on the "Atmosphere of the Fairy Queen" contains some fine imaginative writing, and one very illuminating remark on Spenser's characteristic stanza, "the mould appropriate to his syntax and his thought": "though it was to be used after him by many poets . . . it never seems so well adapted to their breadth and voice," their "shorter, more analytical and more disjointed way of thinking." Now this is startlingly true. The stanza just fits the Elizabethan sentence. Yet for all that, its richest and noblest use is found not in the *Fairy Queen* but in the *Eve of St. Agnes* and *Adonais*. Strange that M. Legouis should not have seen this! The secret of the matter is simply that in all Spenser's elegantly decorative poetry the modern ear can detect "something wanting," a mysterious but essential *inner* quality only obtained when the fire of imagination is concentrated into rare lines and rarer stanzas, instead of being diffused monotonously and evenly over hundreds of pages. Spenser seems to have wielded a magically ready and efficient pen, which made his task too easy.

ANOTHER RENDERING OF "FAUST."

Professor Van der Smitten, of Toronto University, has no need to apologise for his *Faust for English Readers* (Dent, 16s.), even though, as he tells us, there are already more than two score translations of the drama and hundreds of critical books about it. Goethe was a demigod of poetry, and the complete *Faust* is like a cosmos, sometimes dazzlingly clear and sometimes foggy, reflecting his mind and experience. It contains food for the subtlest philosopher and the simplest verse-lover. Everyone may interpret its intricate meanings according to his fancy, but erudition and thought are never wasted upon it. Professor Van der Smitten has sufficient scholar-

ship to "give English readers the benefit of recent investigations . . . a sort of compendium of German criticism up to date." He does this by way of ample notes, with continual reference to Goethe's own letters and life story, and also by drastic editing—the famous but obscure *Golden Wedding Intermezzo* is omitted, and one scene is entirely displaced. But the best evidence of scholarly wisdom is to be found in his elaborate exposition (this is a better word than interpretation) of the whole. No opinion is thrust down the reader's throat. He is helped to judge this highly problematic work for himself, to see it as not only a philosophy of life but also a philosophy of poetry, an attempt to reconcile the classic and romantic ideals. Indeed, there is a tacit suggestion that poetry and life in its highest terms are inseparable.

The verse keeps up to a high and steady level. There is nothing in it quite equal to Shelley's treatment of the opening chorus, beginning

"The sun makes music as of old,
Amid the rival spheres of Heaven"

—a lyric born, not made. At the same time, from so whimsical a translator as Shelley we should certainly not have had a faithful reproduction of each several German metre. This feat has actually been accomplished by Professor Van der Smitten. He is to be congratulated particularly on his skill with alexandrines, the most mulish and refractory of measures, in Part II, IV, 10, and in his use of rhyme in the light conversational banter of Mephistopheles, for instance, in the first page or so of Scene II, the same act, or in parts of the Walpurgis scene.

* * *

Dr. Furnival, in 1888, appealed for "someone with access to a large library to compile 'the Praise of Chaucer'—all allusions to him from his own day to (say) Dryden, and the chief ones since." His desire has at last been generously fulfilled by Professor Caroline Spurgeon, of London University. Her *Five Hundred Years of Chaucer Criticism and Allusion* (Cambridge University Press, 50s. net) occupies three large volumes, and the references are practically *complete* up to so late a date as 1800! If anyone is prepared to complain of the apparent over-meticulousness of this task, he must at least bear in mind that Miss Spurgeon originally undertook it solely for the convenience of the Chaucer Society. Moreover, there is purpose in it all. The introductory chapter of 144 pages is a sound apology for the great labour, besides being a masterly summary of facts, which every student of English literature should

read. Miss Spurgeon sees and indicates the larger problems looming through her maze of details. Why did the sixteenth century praise Chaucer conventionally and the eighteenth wrangle discriminatingly over him? Why should the real nature of his humour have gone unrecognised till comparatively modern times? And what was the new and astounding critical consciousness born suddenly in the brain of Dryden in 1700, leading him to form a truer evaluation of Chaucer than any of the generation which followed? These are questions for the psychologist, and there is no doubt that psychology will one day owe an enormous amount to literary criticism. Opinion of Chaucer throughout the ages seems to have been almost as fundamental and vital a touchstone of thought as opinion on Shakespeare. No one is likely to read this book conscientiously through, but the many who will use it for reference should find in it also a considerable amount of intellectual stimulus.

* * *

Those who remember Dr. C. W. Wallace's article in an early issue of *THE POETRY REVIEW* on his Shakespearean investigations will be interested in a personal note by Goldie Capers Smith, in "Creative Arts in Texas," recently published at Dallas: Charles William Wallace, who spent several years in Wichita Falls and the surrounding oil country, is perhaps the best informed man in the United States on Shakespeare and Shakespearean English. Dr. Wallace is a Missourian by birth. He attended the Western Normal College at Shenandoah, Iowa, and University of Nebraska, the University of Chicago, and the University of Freiburg, from which he received the Ph.D. Degree. He first taught in country schools, later at Western College, at the Fremont, Nebraska, Normal School, and the University of Nebraska. He was the founder and director of a preparatory school, now Lincoln Academy. In 1901, he became instructor in English in the University of Nebraska, and was advanced to Professor of English Drama in 1910. The following volumes have been written or edited by Dr. Wallace: *Lyrics for Leisure Moments*, (1892); *The Children of the Chapel at Blackfriars* (1908); *Three London Theatres of Shakespeare's Time* (1909); *Shakespeare and his London Associates* (1910); *The Evolution of the English Drama up to Shakespeare* (1912); *The First London Theatre* (1913). He is also the author of numerous articles concerning Shakespeare discoveries. Dr. Wallace, while on leave from the University of Nebraska to secure funds for Shakespearean research, amassed a fortune in Texas oilfields. He has converted his interests into a fund for the establishment of an American Foundation for Research.

THE ART OF SPEAKING VERSE :

CONSISTENCY AND VARIETY.

THE first duty of the speaker or actor delivering verse is to set out to discover the general atmosphere or main line of thought expressed in the piece, to realise the spirit that informs the whole. Is it a pure lyric ? A ballad of dramatic simplicity, like *Barbara Allen* ? A declamation on a single theme, or some pure expression of thought, as in the cases of *Juliet*, *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* ? Whatever be the form, the central thought must be first understood, for that is to give the whole rendering its colour, with the *consistency* that is essential to an intelligent and intelligible delivery ; the striking and maintaining of the true note, by means mainly of pitch and pace, are absolutely necessary for a true interpretation.

But this question, like every other, has its reverse side, and consistency, to be effective, must be tempered with variety, even as justice with mercy. Consistency is not synonymous with monotony, and, in dramatic verse particularly, it is seldom that some change of thought does not occur, which must be marked by the voice, if only to bring out the main idea more clearly by the contrast.

A good lyric example of the necessity for variety may be found in Mr. de la Mare's *Nod*. Here, the whole atmosphere of country peace, the strong key-note of simplicity, are obvious ; the age of the shepherd, his calling, the time of day, all demand a low pitch and a slow tempo. But the third stanza calls up an image of quick movement ; the young hedge, the conies, the birds, take the place of *Nod*, who is not mentioned, and the consequent increase of pace and lightening of tone is a relief in the material as well as the emotional sense, and enables the speaker to return for the two final stanzas to the "lento" of the opening, which is thus accentuated considerably more in effect than in actuality. Look, now, at *Juliet's* soliloquy in *Romeo and Juliet*, Act III, Scene 2. At first sight this is a purely lyrical outburst conceived in an ecstatic strain which an entirely *consistent* delivery would maintain throughout. But a more serious study reveals an aspect far different from this. To begin with, the speech should not be treated as a lyric invocation to night ; that is to neglect entirely its dramatic significance. Night, for *Juliet*, is a means, not an end ; it is but such another link between her and *Romeo*, as is the nurse who carries messages and rope ladders. On the occasion of the speech, *Juliet*, now at the climax of her love, is but marking time while she awaits a definite message, and her thoughts are with her husband alone. Idea follows idea, often but slightly connected save through the golden link of *Romeo*, and to convey her emotions, quick changes of voice and time are

essential. Consistent in theme the speech is—and the theme is not night, but Romeo—but the emotion varies from impatience and tender fancy to deepest longing, and back again to restless impatience until the return of the nurse brings tragedy at last.

It is necessary to analyse examples in the foregoing manner, for, otherwise, easy generalisations may be made which have no real value, and, as in every art, practice alone can determine the worth of theory. The conclusion would seem to be that *consistency* must come first. That is to say, the main idea and outstanding characteristics must first be understood, and the pitch and pace necessary to convey them used to inform the entire piece. But when the general atmosphere has been determined, moments of relief should be sought, and these are, in fact, invariably provided by the poet, and advantage can be taken of them without disturbing, but merely relieving, and sometimes heightening, the atmosphere. Could we realise the hushed lyricism of the Balcony Scene were it not lightened by those fanciful tones that creep into the notes of both the lovers, and by that one tragic chord of prevision from Juliet? The first and final notes of Flecker's *Brumana*—unutterable longing, and the bitter pain of defeated hope—are they not the more poignant for the beauty and imagery of the lines that divide them?

Consistency is indeed the body and strength of all true interpretation, but delicate variety is the soul that gives it life.

LILIAN E. SIMPSON.

Miss Nellie Sargent, in her "Evening with the Poets" at the Grotian Hall on December 14th, achieved a remarkable success. She showed what exquisite pleasure can be given by a well-balanced programme of pure poetry. That one or two of the modern items were flippant and not true to nature or art did not detract from the general excellence of the programme or the sincerity of our appreciation. The best work was magical in its influence on the speaker and her audience.

* * *

The Poets' Contribution to the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre.

To meet the wishes of some overseas contributors, entries will be received up to February 28th. No further extension of date can be given, as the adjudication must be completed before April 23rd. Full particulars of this competition, which should appeal to all verse-writers, appeared in our last issue, p. 453, or will be supplied on application to the Editor.

THE ELEGY OF A LONDONER

THE poem that has given more lasting pleasure than any other in the language—richly endowed though we are with fine poetry—was the work of an exclusive little Cockney. One need not be “literary” in order to appreciate this contribution to the many feeders of London pride. For has not Thomas Gray, who was born within the sound of Bow Bells on December 26th, 1716, been described by “a much-praised poet of the present day” as “the poet of mediocrity,” whose immortal *Elegy* is “a triumph of the commonplace.” This is a fine tribute to the greatness of a poem which we do not read! We know it and remember it, for it is engraved not only in the brain but on the heart of the English people. It is known so widely and well that with thousands of people it is the grand remedy for insomnia. Mr. A. C. Benson, in a recent *POETRY REVIEW*, discussed “the secret of Gray” with his customary felicity and insight. But the real secret of Gray was disclosed long ago by the old lady who explained that she was so fond of the *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* because it is so full of quotations.

Mr. Wilfrid Whitten, to whose inexhaustible lore of London town I have been indebted for information on the homes and haunts of poets, and more particularly the “second homes” which Ben Jonson and Kit Marlowe knew better than Thomas Gray, could guide a pilgrim better than I can do round the London shrines of Gray. But the place of his nativity can be accurately indicated. Although the present building known as 41 Cornhill is not the actual house of his birth, it was built by the poet in 1738 to replace the house on this site in which he was born which had been burnt down. Gray’s father, like Milton’s, was a money-broker; he has been described euphemistically as a “financier,” and his son inherited some part of his harsh, morose father’s practical nature, and was able to rebuild his birthplace out of the insurance money. But, like all great men, Gray owed more to his mother than to his father. She was, as he recorded on her tomb in Stoke Poges churchyard, “the careful mother of many children” (actually twelve), “one of whom alone had the misfortune to survive her.” With an unmarried sister, she had a profitable millinery business, and was able to send her son to Eton (where he had Horace Walpole as a bosom friend), and afterwards to Cambridge, where he resented the domination of mathematics, and in desperation took melancholy for his own. He had a perverse pleasure in despondency: “low spirits,” he complained to a friend, “are my true and faithful companions; they get up with me, go to bed with me, make journeys and returns as I do, but most commonly we sit together, and are the prettiest

insipid company in the world." Nevertheless, Peterhouse, and afterwards Pembroke, were his most permanent abiding places in life; and if he regarded the mathematical atmosphere of "the silly, dirty place" as uncongenial, and found in despondency an excuse for indolence, he filled himself with an extraordinary amount and range of literary knowledge, becoming, according to friends, "the most learned man in Europe." By inclination and habits he was more fitted than Cowper to be the laureate of the sofa or a second Lyly; yet this erudite dilettante inaugurated a new era in English poetry; this stiff and formal virtuoso and formidable Don produced the simplest, best understood and most truly Anglican poem, which is as great and as commonplace as the sublime facts of life and death, and like them an essential and continual part of our existence whether we are conscious of it or not.

Stoke Poges has more visible associations with Gray than London now possesses. West End Farm, not far from the church, to which his mother retired, has gone so far as the building which the poet knew is concerned, but in the grounds of Stoke Court his summer-house remains; and in the churchyard are his own, his mother's and his aunt's tombs—national monuments which were visited annually before the war by twenty thousand members of the English-speaking people, chiefly Americans. An American, a grandson of the founder of Pennsylvania, who hailed from a near-by hamlet, put up a massive monument to the "great Lyric and Elegiac Poet" in a field adjoining the churchyard—a cenotaph that was for sale, but was not annexed by an American war profiteer. Several other schemes for permanently commemorating the memory of Gray have been brought to notice recently, the one most favoured being not the preservation of the Penn monument, but the provision of a small Gray library and museum which will concentrate the interest in this most characteristic shrine of English poetry now peace again makes free the pathways of the world.

Londoners owe to Gray something more than his revolt against urban and conventional poetry. The poet not only re-discovered the countryside, but he revealed to his generation and the myriads that have followed him to Burnham the peaceful charm and beauty of hill and vale covered with most venerable beeches that are always dreaming out their old stories to the winds. At their feet was born the poetry of democracy and human sympathy, which culminated in Burns and Wordsworth and is in the ascendant again, restoring to poetry its ancient value and significance.

K. R.

THE POETRY SOCIETY AND ITS JOURNAL

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

SIR,—On the eve of the 19th year of the Poetry Society and its Journal I think (as one who has been intimately interested in both since their inception) it is timely to express briefly a sense of gratification at this record in literary history and of recognition of the consistent way in which the ideals of the Poetry Society have been represented and presented through a difficult period and in face of various inducements to neglect them.

From the beginning the Society has had a double object—to mark the value of poetry, which is one of England's finest possessions, and to feed the younger generation by upholding to them only what is best in poetry, as Matthew Arnold always insisted upon. Besides this, the Poetry Society has undertaken a serious task in encouraging its many pupils both to write original verse and to submit it for reasoned and judicious criticism, and also, what is still more useful and effective, it has held all over the country examinations in verse-speaking for children of all ages, which have been conducted with so much skill and distinction by Mr. Hulbert that in certain towns the speaking of the children is now quite different from what it was a few years ago for, owing to his earnest application of the Society's policy (which has always been insisted upon since Lady Margaret Sackville made her notable presidential address in 1909), we have obtained really great results and he is determined to keep the standard high with insistence upon the spiritual as well as the technical significance of the work which has been responsible for introducing thousands of children to a realisation of the value and significance of poetry and keeping them continuously under its influence. I have followed this work, which has made a personal appeal to me, with the deepest interest and have first-hand knowledge of its value, which I am glad to see is being recognised by such authorities as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education and by the Board's Inspectors.

I would like to say a great deal about THE POETRY REVIEW which we have not been able to maintain as a monthly publication since the War interfered so seriously with arrangements and prices, but which every other month does go round the English-speaking world in the name of the Society, affirming our faith in the best in poetry and

standing for a consistent sanity of judgment and a healthy appreciation of poetry that should be the possession and privilege of every man and woman. THE POETRY REVIEW has had no narrow circle to serve, and it has, happily, not been led away by, or identified with, the fashions and fads of the moment in either criticism or original work. In the latter, contributors have been kept to the rails; but it is particularly in the former and the critical service it has rendered during the unsettled time that the REVIEW must have had its greatest influence and has rendered an invaluable service to our day and the younger generation.

I would like to further extend and particularise this brief survey of the Society's activities and recognise the importance of the Journal that is issued on behalf of members and of the way in which the peculiar *raison d'être* of the REVIEW has been observed, but I must leave the task of filling in details to the many readers who, like myself, have been associated with the Society for a comparatively long period.—I am, Sir, Yours, etc.,

W. F. R.

[We greatly appreciate this opportune recognition from one of the earliest and oldest of our members, who has been intimately associated with the Society as its Elder Councillor on the Governing Body and later as its most active President, who lost no opportunity of serving the Society and advancing its influence. Work in connection with schools and young children is a thing particularly close to Mr. Rawnsley's heart and it is with extreme regret, we know to him as well as to ourselves, that advancing years have caused a curtailment of the activities of one who has always been a sympathetic, kindly mentor, and constructive critic, actuated by the highest motives and inspired by a fine flavour of the best of Victorian culture. —Ed.]

* * *

Many readers acquainted with the work of Prof. Allardyce Nicoll, which we have noticed from time to time, will welcome the news that the Cambridge University Press will publish early in the New Year the third volume of his history of post-Restoration drama. This volume deals with *Late Eighteenth Century Drama* and covers the period 1750–1800, which opens with the first triumphs of David Garrick and closes in the full flush of enthusiasm for German drama.

A TENNYSON COMMENTARY:

A NOTE ON AN EMINENT AUTHORITY'S REFERENCE TO TENNYSON AS "BROWNING'S GREAT CONTEMPORARY."

Murray's Dictionary defines "great" as "eminent by reason of birth, rank, wealth, power, or position; of eminent rank or place." The question whether Tennyson was "great" or not is a question of whether he deserves to be considered eminent in rank among the great men of the world; or whether he deserves a reputation of but a short duration. The whole discussion revolves round two points: What is catholicity in Art? Does Tennyson's art fulfil the conditions necessary to make us consider it of universal application?

To make an appeal to men of all races and all ages, poetry must possess formal beauty—word and rhythm beauty—and contain sentiments understandable of man in general. Poetry which cannot be appreciated without considerable education in the history of the people for whom it was written will never make a universal appeal.

Much of Tennyson's poetry, it is generally held, is of this purely topical nature. For that poetry he cannot be called "great." It was Victorian in outlook; it was marred by impossible bathos; it was so entirely insular in spirit. Its main purpose was to act as a sedative to Victorians. It would, then, indeed, be surprising if it made any appeal to an age so different to the Victorian as our own.

On the other hand there is much poetry which appealed to Tennyson's contemporaries by virtue of their feelings as men, or failed to appeal to them in so far as they were peculiar beings of the nineteenth century. This poetry has as wide an appeal as poetry can have.

The early poems up till 1842 need not be considered. Most of them represent the influence of Keats and Coleridge, and do not represent in any way the poet's originality. But the publications of 1842 and the following years are the "greatest" and the most important of his works, and probably those which will decide the question of his immortality. However much we may disagree with some of the sentiments expressed in the *Ode to the Duke of Wellington*, we cannot deny its grandeur; nor can the intrinsic worth of *In Memoriam* be considered in any way of only a limited appeal.

The poetry upon which an unfavourable judgment is generally passed contains passages of great poetic beauty. But omitting pieces like the magnificent ending of *The Passing of Arthur*, and considering the poems which appeared between 1857 and 1872 in their general aspect only, we are forced to admit that the adverse criticisms generally made are justified. *The Idylls* and *Enoch Arden*

are mid-Victorian; and, as Mr. Nicholson says, "it is impossible for us to conquer the impression . . . that these poems . . . are for the most part intellectually insecure." It will not be by these that Tennyson will be remembered.

Following upon the last *Idylls*, the poet turned to drama. Again, it will not be by his plays that he will be remembered. He was induced to cease, and in 1880 published the poems which are only second in importance to those of 1842.

The very early period of his life, for all its immaturity, produced *The Lady of Shalott*; what may be called the pre- and the post-Victorian periods gave *Maude*, *In Memoriam*, *Tiresias*, and all those poems which have raised a permanent monument to his poetic abilities; there could be no question of Tennyson dying if his reputation depended only upon these. But his great poems far outbalance his failures. He must live; it would be too great a disaster to allow the good to be obscured by emphasising the bad; he must be acknowledged as "Browning's *great* contemporary" despite all his mid-Victorianism.

J. A. C. CRUIKSHANK.

IA

Tennyson stood, in the eyes of Victorian England, head and shoulders above the rest of the poets, and may be termed Browning's "great contemporary" in the sense that he was the spokesman of his age, and mirrored more truly than any other poet of that day the intellectual and ethical traditions of the times. He was more than a poetic chronicler, for he was a consummate artist. Though Tennyson was not a compelling power, with an impassioned message for mankind, such as we find in Browning, his poems give us a kind of "ordered landscape," typical of the mid-Victorian age.

Tennyson was "great" in several ways. His poetry was in the best English tradition, his verse was always melodious and polished, and, except in his early work, he escaped the charge of having no breadth of imagination beneath his word-magic. He was balanced and wholesome, with an unmistakable accent of sincerity, and his lyrics breathe the joys and sorrows of English folk. Whilst Browning's work is like a wild moorland of strong winds and rugged crags, Tennyson's is a "noble English garden."

Critics differ as to Tennyson's position in English poetry, but no one can deny that he is amongst our sweetest and strongest lyrists. Though his Nature pictures have not the Wordsworthian

spirituality of background nor the far horizons of Browning, they are complete and detailed, satisfying to the ear and eye alike. He stands pre-eminent amongst the poets who make the sound echo the sense, and Tennyson is full of haunting lines,

“Jewels five-words-long,
That on the stretched forefinger of all Time
Sparkle for ever.”

ROSE E. SPEIGHT.

IB

The epithet “great” rightly describes Tennyson’s position with regard to Browning in the age in which they both lived. Tennyson was primarily a singer, while Browning was primarily a thinker. Tennyson was the dominant figure in the literature of that age because he had the qualities which make for popularity. None can doubt that Tennyson also was a great thinker. But though his vision and his thoughts ran well ahead of his generation, they yet remained in the groove of his time. He had the vision to forecast the approaching conflicts in religion, in science, in politics, in the social order—but he presented these problems in a strictly orthodox manner. His sentiment was always correct. When we remember in addition that he was intensely patriotic, intensely English, that he wrote *The Ode to the Duke of Wellington*, *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, *The Revenge*, and the *Welcome to Princess Alexandra*, all great poems with a tremendous public appeal, and finally that he held his world spellbound with the magic of his music, music which has seldom been equalled in the whole range of English poetry, it is small wonder that he temporarily eclipsed Browning, Browning whose rush of thought so often transcended his powers of expression; Browning who despised convention; Browning who dived so deep in search of truth, and when he had found it flung it stark in the face of the world regardless of how it would be received.

But time is gradually readjusting its eternal values, and Tennyson, in spite of the wonderful music of his verse, in spite of his real greatness, is taking a second place to Browning, because Browning saw so much deeper into the human heart, into that elemental fire which, glowing as hate, as greed, or passion, or love, moulds all life and all history; and because Browning was gifted with a greater and more vigorous intellect and a more passionate sincerity than was Tennyson.

HILDA McDONALD.

II

INSTANCES OF TENNYSON'S KEEN OBSERVATION OF NATURE.

Of *insects*, in *Claribel* :

“ At me the beetle boometh
 Athwart the thicket lone :
 At noon the wild bee hummeth
 About the moss'd headstone.”

“ And where the two contrived their daughter's good,
 Lies the hawk's cast, the mole has made his run,
 The hedgehog underneath the plantain bores,
 The rabbit fondles his own harmless face,
 The slow-worm creeps, and the thin weasel there
 Follows the mouse, and all is open field.”

The account of the shell in *Maud* :

“ See, what a lovely shell.”

Song, “ The rich smell of the rotting leaves.”

“ The noonday quiet holds the hill :
 The grasshopper is silent in the grass :
 The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
 Rests like a shadow, and the cicala sleeps.”

“ The honeysuckle round the porch has woven its wavy bowers,
 And by the meadow-trenches blow the faint sweet cuckoo flowers,
 And the wild marsh marigold shines like fire in swamp and hollows
 gray.”

IIA

“ Foot-gilt with all the blossom-dust of those
 Deep meadows we had traversed.”

“ In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast;
 In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another
 crest ” ;

“ And drooping chestnut-buds began
 To spread into the perfect fan.”

“ Morn, in the white wake of the morning star,
 Came furrowing all the orient into gold.”

"The pillared dusk of sounding sycamores."

"The league-long roller thundering on the reef,
The moving whisper of huge trees that branched
And blossomed in the zenith."

"And ever the wind blew, and yellowing leaf
And gloom and gleam and shower and shorn plume
Went down it."

"And in the meadows tremulous aspen trees
And poplars made a noise of falling showers."

IIIA

"... knoll to knoll, where couch'd at ease,
The white kine glimmered and the trees
Laid their dark arms about the field."

"A million emeralds break from the ruby budded lime."

"Like a shoal
Of darting fish, that on a summer morn
Adown the crystal dykes at Camelot
Come slipping o'er their shadows on the sand,
But if a man who stands upon the brink
But lift a shining hand against the sun,
There is not left the twinkle of a fin
Betwixt the cressy islets white in flower."

"The rabbit fondles his own harmless face,
The slowworm creeps, and the thin weasel there
Follows the mouse and all is open field."

"A land of streams! some like a downward smoke
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn did go;
And some thro' wavering lights and shadows broke
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below."

"The fields between
Are dewy fresh, browsed by deep udder'd kine,
And all about the large lime feathers low,
The lime a summer home of murmurous wings."

THE SHAKESPEARE PAPERS:

THE TRAGIC ELEMENT IN *THE MERCHANT OF VENICE*

All tragedy necessitates an unhappy ending, and Shakespearean tragedy in particular deals with events which lead up to the death of the hero. For Antonio and the three pairs of lovers in the *Merchant of Venice* the play ends well. It therefore cannot be called a tragedy in the ordinary sense, though it contains an undoubtedly tragic element.

The first scene foreshadows calamity, and Antonio's signing of the bond and the subsequent loss of his ships seem to make it certain. The early part of the trial scene points to his death, which would in a manner carry out the Shakespearean idea of a *good* man being brought to his death through some flaw in his character (in this case excessive generosity). Yet Shakespeare can never have meant to have made of Antonio a tragic character, for though he is good and noble, beloved by his friends, unselfish, and of an open heart, he lacks the outstanding greatness.

Again, there is potential tragedy in the casket story. Portia, with all her charm and brilliant intellect, and capacity for loving, might have been won by a suitor she hated.

But it is the character of Shylock that the tragic element chiefly lies. His hate runs through the play like a menace. Shylock alone suffers ruin, and deservedly. But though his lawful sentence is abated through the mercy of Antonio (to whom he had shown no mercy), he passes out of the court unchanged by his misfortunes. Lear's eyes were opened and he died a better man than he had lived. Othello knew his sin, and repented before he killed himself; but Shylock shows no sign of a finer nature hidden beneath his greed and revenge. Shakespeare perhaps intended his forced acceptance of Christianity to be the means of ultimately humanising him, but this is not stated in the play. As it stands, Shylock's character is the nearest approach to that rare thing in Shakespeare, a *hopeless* tragedy.

But as the comic scenes in *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* do not earn for those great dramas the name of comedies, so the existence of tragic scenes in the *Merchant of Venice* cannot warrant its being called a tragedy. The general atmosphere of the play is a happy one, and it gives a feeling that everything will come right in the end. It may best be described, therefore, as a comedy with a tragic element.

M. B. FOOTE.

THE POETS' FELLOWSHIP:

OUR POINT OF VIEW AND THE PREMIUM AWARDS AND CRITICISM.

AT the beginning of a new volume it may be well to remind our readers of the object for which we are working—that is, the inculcation of the poetic outlook, the infusion—so far as may be from without—of a new inner point of view. We believe that the intelligent reading of poetry is one of the principal helps towards this; and we realise that the writing of poetry is the inevitable result of it, indeed the inevitable measure of its success.

THE POETRY REVIEW is here to provide the necessary platform for the members of the Poetry Society. There is, of course, a door to that platform, and an ogre in charge of the door; for, first, the publication of a poem should not be possible—so irrevocable a thing as it is—unless there is good reason to think that the writer will never regret it; and, second, our readers must not be annoyed by the presentation of matter unworthy of their attention.

But this platform is open immediately to the charms of freshness and sweetness, no matter from what source. We acknowledge no “sworn poets and verifying officers,” for—as a recent competition in the *Observer* has demonstrated—“sworn poets” are liable to very serious misfires; but we recognise a poem when we see one, and then the door is open.

Our country is intensely musical. Those who say otherwise lie in their teeth. Our countrymen are intensely musical; but nobody wants to *listen*; everybody wants to “produce.” Perhaps a little more listening? A little more reading? A little less frequent production? I think that the quality might be better.

As in nature, it is the animal, the consumptive, the feeble-minded who are prolific. That is why the sterile intellectual can afford to smile at their offensive pity. But when the higher life is also productive, then indeed there is cause for joy and no need to seek solace in the Law of Compensations. One has indeed to fear it, for the birth of a great poem is often a matter of pain and travail.

If a poem has cost you no effort, has not even moved you to wet eyes as it entered your mind, believe me it is of no use to send it to THE POETRY REVIEW. We are not interested, nor flattered, to receive “little things” which Fat Complacency has “just thrown off.”

OUTSIDE COMPETITIONS.

In the recent Panton Arts Club contest, Miss A. Doris L. Wilson, one of the sweetest singers of our fellowship, has been awarded a Bronze Medal for an elegy. In the "unpublished volume of verse" section, our Miss Vera Arlett won the Bronze Medal, and Miss Wilson was bracketed first among the Honourable Mentions.

FELLOWSHIP MEETINGS.

An audience of unprecedented dimensions attended the Northern meeting held in Manchester at the Midland Hotel on December 4th. A report of this meeting will be found elsewhere. An interesting discussion took place on the recent acquisition of sums of money by a "publisher" on the pretence of bringing out a Manchester Anthology; it transpired that this person was and is actually an undischarged bankrupt, whose activities are already receiving the careful attention of the law.

On the invitation of the Manchester Centre, it was decided to hold the next meeting at the Midland Hotel, Manchester, on February 12th, at 4 p.m. Mr. L. Conrad Hartley will speak on "The Poet and the Poetic Principle."

SELECTED CRITICISMS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

[If strict privacy of criticism is desired, this must be stated in the application.]

W. A., Belfast.

THE RIDDLE OF THE STARS.

Yes, there is, as you suggest, a structural improvement, but there is improvement in force and diction also. This is really eloquent and exhilarating; but not terse enough to reach the highest levels, except in one or two memorable lines such as "Great strifes like bold fiends leap," the tied-notes in which are very effective, as is also the strength of the otherwise ugly immediate repetition of two of the vowels. There is little room for more studied ornament. You have made quite a feature of consonantal "beading."

[Do not write th' for the, please.]

A HUMBLE WEDDING.

This is very fine, although you altogether over-idealise the rustic mind. You spoil it in the last verse. What on earth (or in it) does

this bridal couple want with "a quiet grave, To rest their length of days" ? I fear rhyme was the rudder here.

[Do not write lov'st for lovest, please.]

THE STUDENT TO HIS LOVE.

Your verb requires the singular in line 4 of verse 2, much reducing the effectiveness of the close. The third and fourth verses I simply cannot understand.

[Do not write o' for of, please.]

DOLLY SCOULOUDI, W.2.

A WORD PORTRAIT.

The poem is a long nominative-of-address, containing not a single finite verb, divided into three apostrophes (verses 1, 2, and 3), and a fourth which gathers up the key-phrases of the first three.

Now this is an idea, and it is only to be judged by its result. The result is not successful, but I must say it has interested me a good deal more than if it had been a sonnet about some private grief.

RUTH JANET BARBER, New York City.

PORCELAINE (sic).

If you were a regular reader, you would know that no apology is necessary for correlations like "terrace" and "harass" We like them, especially in double rhymes. (See Poetry and Science, p. 52-3.) "Harass" is objectionable here solely on account of its meaning. It disturbs to irritation the wholly charming picture of the first three verses containing the typically lovely line, "Languor lies upon the leaves." Yet these very leaves (of ivy) are "harassing" the wall, you say. Scientifically correct! Yes, in a measure, but if you come to that, there is no rest in the universe—which simply is not true, since rest is purely a matter of consciousness. There is one other fault (there are only two altogether, and but for these two you would probably have won this month's "premium"). "I cannot a-bear" two finite verbs in immediate juxtaposition (line 15). While you are altering this, alter also the rhyme (14-15), which to many readers will seem to savour of affectation.

ALBERTA W. BAKER, N. Rand, Transvaal, S.A.

THE OLD OX-WAGON.

This is most promising because it is evident that the identity of the word you are writing at any one moment is suggested by harmony with what has gone before. This is too little checked in parts. Recite the line "Abandoned and alone" without its last syllable and you will

understand what I mean. It is in nice balance in verse three, which is by far the best. "Creaked" is reminiscent of "great," "flapped" of "pot" and "fro." "In the" is a split note and its effect is excellent. Had you rhymed also the first and third lines of the quatrain, this verse would be well-nigh perfect.

The other verses are poor. You introduce many commonplace expressions and change the natural order of the words. (Poetry and Science, p. 57.)

THE KAFFIR DOG.

This is extremely interesting. You have excellent material to work on, and I hope you will continue. Your fault is the commonplace expression. With study your work will become more equal. By the way, "interested" will not do as a rhyme for "infested." Guard against the immediate repetition of a long vowel, particularly if it is to follow the same consonant. "Sly liar-in-wait."

The rest of the criticisms have been sent by post.

OTHER CORRESPONDENCE.

A READER: *We do not pretend to any such familiarity. "Mr." is quite usually omitted in speaking of famous or notorious people.*

A. Y., Oklahoma: *We entirely sympathise with the movement in favour of the spelling Christmas. We hate all clipped words. X in Greek was the aspirated kappa; and since we put C for kappa, we should put ch for X. This is all the more necessary in view of the bastard pronunciation Exmas, which is almost as bad as saying kinema. The Exmas people have not yet, however, gone the length of correcting those who say Christmas. One of our English illustrated newspapers, whose "Pop" and "Jerrywangle" are treasured national possessions, last year coined the expression "A Happy Felixmas," a pun which will strike home, no doubt, even so far away as Oklahoma. It has followed this by asking its readers "to abandon the use of Xmas in the interests of the purity of the language and the dignity of the Christmas festival."*

L. W. J., Leeds: *Certainly, the vowel in "glass" is short. We are not aware that the B.B.C. Committee has made any suggestion on the point; but in any case the word "ruling" is inapposite, as they themselves recognise. There is only one Englishman on the committee, though he is a host in himself.*

THE PREMIUM AWARDS

We must congratulate "Victor Ballan" on winning the Premium for a second time, the conditions we announced on p. 443 of our last volume having been amply fulfilled. His *Song of the Sea* is one of the finest Premium Winners we have had for some time, and the finest of his that I have read.

HIGHLY COMMENDED (with book acknowledgments) are :—Edna A. Kahla (*The Estranged, Nostalgie*), Bowdon; John Cook (*Pilgrimage*), Lenzie; Dorothy Ewens (*Birth of Venus [after Botticelli]*), London, W.2; Editha Jenkinson (*Spirit of Poesy*), Scarborough; Lettie Cole (*The Isles of Scilly*), Hereford; Evelyn D. Bangay (*They Crucified Him—in the Spring*), Chesham, Bucks.

HIGHLY COMMENDED :—N. Lejeune, Diana Firth, D. F. Radford, Doris Rymer.

COMMENDED :—Vera I. Arlett, Barbara Jean Gordon, Florence Overton, Elsie Harriet Rasin, W. Marie Davidson, S. Marguerite Goode, Frederick Kemp, Gwendoline Goodwin, Bertha M. Skeat, Bertha Annakin, Editha Melbourne.

SOME RECENT BOOKS

Anti-Europe is by Lioubomir Mitzitch and is published by the Zenitistes, whoever they may be. It plunges me to the nadir of despair, for although I gain the impression that it is all about nightmares and surgical operations, I can't understand a word of it.

Fallen Leaves, by Mary Brittain (Erskine Macdonald) shows a vein, but it is a vein of humour, more to be desired, perhaps, in the workaday world than the thin air of the heights. She pictures a lecture on Mazzini in the Church Institute at Harrogate and the loss of enthusiasm as the audience slowly froze. There is, however, much of the pedestrian serious stuff, such as "Hyacinth's Message," which all beginners write and wise beginners burn. That is a pity, for poems like "Estrangement" are thus lost amid the rubbish.

Verses for Vera, by Helen Percival (The Betterment Book Room). The second small verse essay in this pamphlet would make an excellent recitation for a child of four or five. I like also the fourth verse of "On the Hillside." Why the remainder was published—including the reprints from *The Christian Science Monitor*—I cannot guess.

Mandragora, by Benn Sowerby (Amersham: The Mascot Press), contains some very fine work indeed, though some of the poems are spoiled by curiously ineffective endings. On the other hand, at least one poor poem "The Rose" is almost redeemed by its ending. Here are many striking felicities, both verbal and ideal. One char-

acter cries to the keening wind "I do not know you." In another poem Mr. Sowerby writes :

"Time has found out this place
And left his seal "

and a whole philosophy of life is compressed into

"and though
Even sorrows strange,
Illimitable with me go,
I seek but change."

"The Vagrant " illustrates a rather pretty measure : it goes like this :

U U \ U \
U U \ U \
U \ U \ U U \ U \

The second and third lines rhyming. All the first lines rhyme together and there are five verses.

The title poem is probably the finest of all, but what I expect to remember best is the last quatrain of "Winter."

A hidden bird piped forth a jet
Of song disconsolate and terse,
As though he also would forget
The riddle of the universe.

Palms, Vol. IV, No. 1 (Idella Purnell, Guadalajara, Mexico) is an anthology of poems by negroes, edited by Countée Cullen. I believe that in America everyone with any negro blood at all is called a negro, as if one were to be called a Frenchman because one of his 64 otherwise English g.-g.-g.-great grandparents was French. Perhaps that is not so ; but it is an interesting point because this book is so very impressive, containing some of the best American poetry we have seen. These writers have been able to overcome the insistence of editors on dialect poetry and are contributing what will be a permanent enrichment of the treasury of the great society of English-speaking people. The editor welcomes the "excellent verse which takes no cognisance of race." Most of the poems in this anthology justify this description. Every poem is eloquent. Every poem presents a fresh idea. We would mention especially Arna Bontemps, Anne Spencer, Countée Cullen, Jessie Fausset and Gwendolyn Bennett.

Twenty Sonnets, by Gustav Davidson (Blue Faun Publications, New York) contain much inspiring eloquence, occasionally spoiled

for the English reader by the spelling. Whatever may be said for *labor*, *color*, and other Latin words, no reason whatever has at any time been advanced for the omission of u in words like *neighbour*. But this is a mere temporary irritation amid the fine

“ march and banners of adventured ways,
The fabled isles, the still reverberant seas.”

One hears recent key-notes in the poetry. One is so tired of “ avatar ” (and electrons and evolution too, but these twain in this case are absent) and of Junes that “ spill ” their measure of gold. But most sonnet-writers are fearful bores, and Mr. Davidson is always interesting as well as eloquent. Even the very naive ending of III is interesting ; but the last line of V is “ Seas unvoyaged on ; shores unvisited ! ” which isn’t a true sonnet-line at all and would horrify the wretches who think that poetry should be written on the lines of a knitting pattern : “ Two purl, three plain.”

I hope I am making it clear that this is an important book, a book to buy for readers, a book almost equally inspiring for writers. He says

“ We are but an ache
Of half desires, of nebulous commands,
Leaving us words of marvel, left unsaid ;
Seas unvoyaged on ; shores unvisited.”

Here are words of marvel, said ; and said with a fine, plain beauty.

Via Vitae, by “ A Sister of Charity ” (Humphrey Milford : 2s. net) is a little Morality Play. The diction is that curious mixture of the commonplace and the stilted which many people misconceive as poetic. There is one new thought in the play—and that is mere sadness : that both the narrow way and the broad way lead to the West.

Christian Verse, by Blanche Cooper (Arthur H. Stockwell), is an orgy of italics, quotation-marks and slop. What does *cans’t* mean (p. 7), by the way ? We protest against this sort of misuse of the word Christian, which is already the joke of our newspaper headlines in respect of a certain Chinese general. The best verse reads as follows :

The cause of this sorrow
You all know I think
But, Lest you’ve forgotten, I’ll tell you,
“ ’Twas Drink.”

Humberside, Vol. II., No. 2 (Sherratt and Hughes) contains a thoughtful essay on criticism by Arnold H. Lewis and much poetry by Maurice Philip, Whitaker Bradley, J. Redwood Anderson and Frank Noble Wood, of which "To Rima" at least should be mentioned with warm appreciation. Strange, with all this talent, that there should be as yet no Hull Centre of the Poetry Society! F. Hope Scott's article is a fresh contribution to the unending controversy about Art and Ethics. Mr. Harbron's article on Literature and Architecture has what must be surely the unique distinction of not mentioning Vitruvius.

Mountains and Molehills (Gorham Press, Boston, U.S.A.) is a collection of essays and poems by Harry Elmore Hurd. I must praise it with care, for on p. 65 I find "The miserly old poplars turn their silver over in the rain, always counting," which is a misquotation from Honor Leeke; and, on p. 151, "They fell to earth, someplace, I knew not where" which is a plagiarism from one who was almost a countryman.

This, I should say, is original:

He fired! Like clod
In grave it fell—
A man. "Good God,
My son!" His yell

and so on. He says (p. 67) "All of nature" for "All nature" (like that miserable ditty "All of the time"), "Day after to-morrow" for "The day after to-morrow," and what on earth are "redened fingers" (p. 90), and what is "'round" (p. 97)? There is a strange slander on physicians on p. 66 which is new to me and, I am certain, untrue. Indict them if you will, but not on imaginary counts. Talk about the kidnapping of tame Airedales for the medical shambles, for that is true; but allegations against personal honour, on this side, at all events, have not a leg to stand on. The essay ends "It is the expulsive power of God's great purpose." God works in a mysterious way! Mr. Hurd calls his verse "hard-toiled." What a chance for some really inspired compositor!

O. C. de C. E.

* * *

A meeting of the Poets' Fellowship will be held at the Midland Hotel, Manchester, on Saturday, February 12th, when Mr. Conrad Hartley will introduce a discussion with a paper on "The Poet and the Poetic Principle." Tickets 3s. 6d. each, from Mrs. Brundett Twcedale, The Valley House, Wilmslow, Manchester.

THE PREMIER DISTINCTION FOR VERSE-SPEAKING

The annual London examination for the Poetry Society's verse-speaking gold medal and competition for the Lady Margaret Gold Medal took the customary form of a poetry recital, which was given at the Spring Gardens Galleries, The Mall, S.W., on December 18th. Twenty-one holders of the Society's silver medal for excellence in the art of speaking verse contributed a diversified programme in which modern poetry predominated.

Dr. Hulbert awarded the Lady Margaret Gold Medal, the premier honour of the year, to Miss Doris F. Martin-Harvey, who showed a firm grip of her subject, and allowed her sense of rhythm to have full play, which enabled her, while keeping to the main thought, to give harmony, symmetry and consistency, and the right tone to every particular thought.

Miss Peggy Hodge allowed her sense of rhythm to successfully bring out the chief thoughts of her poems in a very delicate and fascinating manner, and was awarded a Gold Medal as the one other successful candidate. In the *proxime accessit* class the Examiner placed, with special reference to and commendation of the pieces mentioned, (2) Miss Josephine Elsa Fyffe (a: *Will Shakespeare, Act IV*); (4) Miss Eileen Allbrook (b: *To the Night*, Shelley); (13) Miss Elsie J. Howell (b: *She Was a Phantom of Delight*, Wordsworth); (14) Miss Hilda Vincent (b: *The Dawn Wind*, Kipling); (18) Miss Muriel M. Staveacre (b: *Santorin*, Flecker); (22) Miss Gladys London (a: *The Golden Journey to Samarkand*, Flecker).

The first and last mentioned were particularly noticeable for their dramatic sense, which, in places, overruled their sense of rhythm.

The learned Examiner complained that many of the selections were disastrous. After much study he could not understand them or why the candidates had handicapped themselves so unnecessarily. They had disappointed him, too, by their frequent disregard to rhythm, on which he had based his adjudication. This meant more than a sense of time—it embraced thought in speech, a continuity of idea and expression in which nothing broken, interrupted, harsh, staccato entered, and from which self-display was eliminated. Several of the candidates had not subjected self to their art—they were clever and knew it, and an unbalanced personality prevented anything approaching a rhythmical performance. They were masters neither of themselves nor of vision. Even in technique some of them failed, doing worse than in their certificate days, being guilty of duplication of sounds, and demonstrating their lack of finished artistry, their inability to control the occasion.

In consequence, that test, a severe ordeal to the young artist, would be of incalculable benefit. They would realise better what

was expected from them and gain an experience that was beyond all teaching to inculcate. For the benefit of his audience, Dr. Hulbert proceeded to point out that in the certificate class attention was paid to technique, whether the examinee used his vocal apparatus properly and could give some idea of music in words. In the bronze medal class they expected even a child to distinguish between the literal significance of the words and the simile or metaphor—the child was expected to use that dangerous faculty, imagination. In the silver medal class the candidates were expected to show feeling and to exercise the dramatic sense and identify themselves with the thoughts and emotions expressed. The gold medal went beyond that—it postulated the finished artist, the ideal interpreter of poetry, the Muse of the Poet, illuminated by the light that never was on sea or land, the idealisation of the words by a sense of rhythm in the widest sense.

In the absence in America of the President-General, Mrs. Mends Gibson, President of the Kensington Centre, presented the gold medals to the successful candidates, and thanked Dr. Hulbert for advocating so consistently, carefully and effectively the ideas of the Society.

* * *

A special examination in the art of reading and speaking verse will be held at the University of London, South Kensington, on February 26th. A second examiner will take certificate candidates if a sufficient number of entries are received by February 22nd—otherwise these candidates will be taken at the ordinary general examination in March. A list of the new test pieces, entry forms and other particulars may be obtained from the Registrar, at 16, Featherstone Buildings, W.C.1.

These auditions, which constitute the most serious and valuable examinations of their kind, may be attended by readers interested in this important phase of the Society's work. Admission permits must be obtained in advance from the General Offices of the Society, the examinations not being open public meetings. It is desirable, however, that members and others should be personally acquainted with them.

* * *

Kensington Centre members are requested to forward their subscriptions when due to the General Secretary at 16, Featherstone Buildings. This will relieve the Centre Secretary of considerable clerical labour.

ON READING POETRY ALOUD

UPON the occasion of a very pleasant POETRY REVIEW luncheon at Parklane Hotel, New York City, Mrs. Marie Tello Phillips, V.P., spoke on the reading of poetry aloud. She agreed with Sydney Lanier that poetry is a form of music, and must be voiced to be fully appreciated. It is the music of the spoken voice, in contradistinction to the music of the singing voice, which Lanier says is a reed instrument, and to be classed with instrumental music as to quality. All speech may be musical and has its rhythm, but in poetry we have the regular rhythms of music, tone-colour and sometimes rhyme which find their best instrument of expression in the speaking voice. The beauty of the speaking voice does not receive the recognition that it should. The widely acclaimed golden voice of the divine Sarah Bernhardt was an instance where the beauty of the speaking voice was widely appreciated. Paris has led in this appreciation, and has well attended matinees where popular actresses in gorgeous stage-settings read the lines of contemporary poets—sometimes standing before a curtain of crimson velvet, attired in a contrasting robe of white, black or canary, to suit the context, while a delighted audience listens spellbound. We have not gone so far. An audience such as described would more likely be found at a performance of *The Bat*. However, poetry readings, especially for women's clubs, are frequently given and well attended. Edwin Markham, Witter Bynner, Christopher Morely, Edna St. Vincent Millay and John Farrar read recently in Pittsburgh. They are all beautiful readers. While some of the more serious verse of a religious or philosophic type is better read silently because of the opportunity for meditation, and some lyric verse is better sung than read, the verse which has a dramatic or martial quality or derives its charm from its singing quality, its musical rhythm, tone, colour or rhyme, lends itself best to reading aloud. A reader of poetry frequently gets the attention of his audience by creating an atmosphere for what he is about to read, sometimes by recounting the occasion which led to the writing of the poem. One reason that some people do not like poetry is that they cannot imagine it as it should be read, aloud. Those who can, get a special enjoyment out of it, only paralleled by the pleasure a musician feels who reads music at sight, and can imagine the way it should be played or sung. The reading of poetry aloud in a good speaking voice is as great an art, and as enjoyable, as the correct expression of written music by the singing voice or musical instrument, and just as conducive to the development of a love for poetry as the latter is to developing a love for music.

CLARITY IN POETRY.

The Manchester Guardian reported that at a well-attended meeting of the northern group of the Poets' Fellowship in Manchester on December 4th Mr. J. W. Aizlewood, president of the Sheffield Centre of the Poetry Society, gave an address entitled "On the Virtue of Clarity in Poetry." Mr. Conrad Hartley presided.

Quoting Drayton's lines on Marlowe, in which he refers to Marlowe's raptures being "all air and fire," Mr. Aizlewood said it had been suggested that Marlowe had some secret of his own for the "air and fire" which produced such clarity. But there was no secret save personality and individuality. It was the fundamental brainwork, as Rossetti said, which distinguished great art from small. One factor in the attainment of clarity was good sense, and the more one read and thought about poetry the more one was convinced that without sense no poetry was destined to live. Great poems that survived in popular estimation were marked by good sense.

In Ruskin's day Byron was out of fashion, but Ruskin, in one of his essays, championed the cause of Byron as against his detractors, remarking that, whatever Byron's faults might have been, he had power and sense. And Charles Kingsley, too, bemoaned the time "when Pope and plain sense went out and Shelley and the seventh heaven came in." The best and most popular poetry was an ideal marriage of beauty, rhythmical beauty, and good sense. In no kind of men were sense, taste, and discretion so necessary as in poets, for without those qualities they would overflow into bombast on the one side, or sink into bathos on the other.

Writing about 1891, William Watson said: "Our own age is not marked by exaggerated passion for transpicuity. On the contrary, such tolerance of obscurity and vagueness has never before been witnessed. Browning is the most obvious illustration." And then Watson struck a prophetic note. "It is far more probable," he said, "that the twentieth century would see a reaction in favour of something like eighteenth century straightforwardness than an increased lenience towards opacity of thought and of style."

He (Mr. Aizlewood) thought this prophecy had been fulfilled. In many of the accepted poets of our own day we got simplicity and we got true feeling without over-ornateness and obscurity, and in these days of broadcasting this tendency should grow stronger. When all the ambitious young poets would aspire to have their lines broadcast to the whole listening world their verse-movements would become more fluid and their meaning clearer. England should once more become a nest of singing birds as in the spacious days of Queen Elizabeth; it would be the spring freshness of the Elizabethan stage reawakened in a reviving world.

The Manchester Guardian should have added that the Poets' Fellowship is not a new or separate entity, but is a group within the Poetry Society: a verse writers' centre and POETRY REVIEW contributors' circle.

KEATS AND MUSIC.

The Poetry Society (Wimbledon Centre) presented, at the "Wilderness," Parkside, a programme of a novel type. Mr. A. W. Wills, the president, read a paper on "John Keats," with musical illustration to each of six episodes into which, for that purpose, the lecturer divided the poet's life and works. Mr. Neumann (violin) and Miss Doubleday (piano) executed the musical part of the programme.

Mr. Wills gave a sympathetic address (which we hope will be repeated, together with the musical illustrations, at a general meeting of the Society), and proceeded, for the purpose of illustration by descriptive poems and music, to divide Keats's life into six periods: 1816—In the first, *Sleep and Poetry* showed his earnest search for philosophic truth. The sonnet on *Chapman's Homer* showed the mood of this time, his entry into poetic work, to be that of hope and vision. The music chosen was Wagner's *Preislied*. 1817—In the second period came a rush of luxuriant fancy. *Endymion* was a following up of his quest of an ideal of Beauty, but the riotous mood of this period was better shown by the Bacchic revelry in the fourth book. The music for this period was Cesar Franck's Sonata, 2nd movement. 1818—In the third period there came a foreboding of his malady and fears of frustration. The sonnet *When I have fears* shows this. *The Ode to Maia* and the *Epistle to Reynolds* represented his reactions to these fears. Yet he began *Hyperion*. Music, *Grave*, F. Bach. 1819—Keats's golden period of production came next in the first half of 1819. He became engaged to Fanny Brawne, but had further symptoms of consumption. This period of high emotion seemed to have resulted in a passionate reaction against the sense of transience in all things. But he announced in the *Ode to the Grecian Urn* his faith that "Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty." Music: Bach, F minor Sonata, 3rd movement. Then came Keats's *Valley of the Shadow*. Disillusioned in his dream of love, largely by its own insufficiency, and in pain of body and mind, he still made music out of his despair. Verses: *La Belle Dame sans Merci* and *Lines to Fanny*. Music: Schubert, *Am Meer*. In the last period of Keats's life (1819) he attempted the recasting of *Hyperion*, in *Hyperion, a Vision*.

VERSE SPEAKING EXAMINATIONS PASS LISTS.

The Examiners report a continued improvement in the general standard, particularly in the more advanced grades, at the Autumn auditions in London and the provinces. Throughout there has been little difficulty in hearing every word spoken, clear, definite articulation seldom degenerating into formally precise or affected enunciation—a notable achievement for so considerable and general a body of candidates. There has been also a marked increase in what has always been very apparent, particularly in Sheffield—the musical quality of the voices. Voice production and pronunciation continue to receive careful attention, and to represent very thorough effective work by the teachers.

The candidates passed with “Honours” are distinguished by the Examiners as examples of really fine artistic speakers who approach very nearly the high standard aimed at, combining cultivated, refined voices effectively used, with individual intelligence in interpretation, showing that the speaker is at one with the thought and emotion expressed, going a long way towards giving an ideal impression. Too often, even with a delightful voice, it is apparent that the speaker has little regard or sympathy for the words spoken, which remain outside his or her mind. A great deal of credit for the actual results is due to the teachers, but the real interpretation depends on the individual performer, who must not be content with being the instrument of an effective trainer but must bring personality to bear on artistry.

PASS LISTS.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON, OCTOBER 16TH, 1926.

CERTIFICATES.—Junior (Special Distinction): Eric Bates. (Honours): Cecilia Coshover, Ruth Lush, Adolf Woolf. (Commended): Gertie Warshawsky, Marion Lily Collett, Maud Shea, Rosa Ferario, Leonard Daniel Wickenden, Sylvia Phillips. (Pass): Rose Hughes, Madeline Joan Philp, Gerald Harris, John Wilkinson, Victor Cohen, Ethel Lush.

Senior (Honours): Margaret Middleton, Millie Offenheim. (Commended): Peter Dearing, Evelyn Antrich, Sylvia Gallant, Eileen Joy. (Pass): Frances Barnet, Helen Lush.

Adult (Honours): Marjorie Smith.

MEDALS.—*Bronze*: Junior (Special Distinction): Phyllis Myers. (Commended): Rita Cohen, Annie Lipman.

Senior (Honours): Ruth Lofts, Sadie Shavelson.

Adult (Honours): Stella Griffiths. (Pass): Rita Salaman.

Silver: Junior: (Pass): Betty Rosemary Reynolds.

Adult (Honours): Eileen A. M. Ely. (Pass): Mildred Hooper, Beryl M. Barnwell.

VERSE SPEAKING EXAMINATIONS

69

SHEFFIELD, NOVEMBER 16TH, 1926.

CERTIFICATE CLASS.—Juniors (Honours): Alan Roebuck, Margery Wilkinson, Doris Gill, Nora Exley, Elizabeth Clark, Margaret Atkinson, Peggy Brown. (Commended): Mary Wragg, Doreen Gilbert, Olwen Evans, Edna Taylor. (Pass): Enid Boler, Elsie Cooper.

Seniors (Special Distinction): Phyllis Tucker. (Honours): Gwen Grindler. (Commended): Mary Mawson, Pansy Wragg, Mary Woodcock, Madge Darwin. (Pass): Eileen Graham.

Adults (Honours): Marjory Hirst, Annie MacArthur, Marjorie Warden, William Jenkins Gibson, Lilian Cooper, Connie Woolley. (Commended): René Baker.

BRONZE MEDAL CLASS.—Juniors (Commended): Margaret Gaunt, Doreen Harrison, Anthea W. Wolstenholme, Mary Thompson, Renie Pickard. (Pass): Edith Gaunt, Eileen Ellis.

Seniors (Special Distinction): Elizabeth Brodie. (Honours): Hilda Wilshaw. (Commended): Muriel Mountford, Irene Bargh, Evelyn Marsden, Violet Rich, Marjorie Laughton, Thelma Allen, Eileen Ramsay. (Pass): Beatrice Clarke, Marie Copestake, Jenny Bargh.

Adults (Special Distinction): Florence Ellis. (Honours): Kathleen Boulby, B. Pryce. (Commended): Mary Underwood, Nancy Kaye. (Pass): Freda Moore.

SILVER MEDAL CLASS.—Juniors (Pass): Joan C. Bailey, Joan Selmi, Molly Parton.

Seniors (Honours): Molly Edwards. (Commended): Margery Elliott, Mary White. (Pass): Doreen Youle, Kathleen Morris.

BLACKPOOL, NOVEMBER 18TH, 1926.

CERTIFICATE CLASS.—Juniors (Honours): M. Plant, K. Hart, B. Ingham, D. L. Bennett, J. Lang. (Commended): N. Lockhart, M. Robinson, P. Wright, J. Barnes. (Pass): K. Cooper, J. White-side, G. Drewry, F. Mellor.

Seniors (Special Distinction): M. Cleaver. (Honours): B. Chrystall. (Commended): B. Mackenzie, M. Mathews. (Pass): K. L. M. Hill, J. Schofield.

Adults (Honours): F. Leeming.

BRONZE MEDAL CLASS.—Seniors (Commended): M. S. Hardy.

SEASCALE, NOVEMBER 18TH-19TH, 1926.

CERTIFICATE CLASS.—Juniors (Special Distinction): Joan Ashworth. (Honours): Jean Pinson.

Seniors (Special Distinction): Faith Stubbs. (Honours): Rose-

THE POETRY REVIEW

mary Graham, Alice Platts, Nancy Mattinson, Marion Cole, Joyce Ramsay, Beryl Harger, Joyce Beaver.

BRONZE MEDAL CLASS.—Juniors (Special Distinction) : C. Melrose. (Honours) : B. Nickson.

Seniors (Special Distinction) : Violet Higson. (Honours) : Eleanor McGill, Mary Mackindrick, Noreen Simm, Isobel Smith.

SILVER MEDAL CLASS.—Seniors (Honours) : Marie McGill, Kathleen Sykes. (Commended) : Dorothy White, Mary Hamilton.

KENDAL, NOVEMBER 20TH, 1926.

CERTIFICATE CLASS.—Juniors (Honours) : Rita Farran, Nora Hine, Joyce Hackett. (Commended) : Marjorie Wilson, Joan Moffatt, Gladys Peacock, Elna Wilson. (Pass) : Dorothy Harris.

Seniors (Honours) : Penelope Wilson, Kathleen Metcalfe, Lavinia James. (Commended) : Marjorie Birkett, Edith Wilson, Emma Langhorne, Dorothy Smithies.

BRONZE MEDAL CLASS.—Juniors (Special Distinction) : Amy Smith. (Honours) : Elizabeth Montgomery, Helen Garnett. (Commended) : Ada Chapman. (Pass) : Christina Glass, Margaret Whitehead.

Seniors (Special Distinction) : Mary Wilkinson, Ethel Monkhouse. (Honours) : Freda Rigg, Amy Hawkins, Isabel Atkinson, Dorothy Butler, Reta Brown. (Commended) : Mary Lupton, Anne Wilson.

SILVER MEDAL CLASS.—Juniors (Honours) : Eva Ross, Joan Atkinson. (Commended) : Stella Bickerton, Elizabeth Gibson, Patsy O'Neill.

Seniors (Honours) : Molly Marshall. (Commended) : Constance Newby, Margaret Thomas.

BRIGHTON, NOVEMBER 27TH, 1926.

CERTIFICATE CLASS.—Juniors (Honours) : Julia Wilberforce, Jean Bellingham, Beryl Pockett. (Commended) : Cissie Rose, Laura Kreemer, Sheila Crawford. (Pass) : Elsie M. Lawrence, Joan S. Willden.

Seniors (Honours) : Joy Du Pre, Marjorie Miskin, Jean Merry, Sybil Lethbridge, Margaret Davis, Edith Overbury, Gladys Mauger, Betty Hewitt. (Commended) : Marion Wake, Isobel Meek, Ina Hills, Dorothy Astington, Marjorie Hill, Molly Hill. (Pass) : Rosalind Genn.

Adult (Honours) : Sylvia Corbett. (Commended) : Olive R. Plummer.

BRONZE MEDAL CLASS.—Juniors (Honours) : Hilda Bass. (Commended) : Vera Bass. (Pass) : Hilda Childs, Vera Butt, Irene Cholmondeley.

VERSE SPEAKING EXAMINATIONS

71

Seniors (Honours): Doris Alsford. (Commended): Gladys Irene Masters, Joyce Attewell. (Pass): Edna Joyce Brown, Marjorie de la Hay, Minnie McEwan Law.

SILVER MEDAL CLASS.—Juniors (Honours): Diana Caldwell, Olive Haxton, Theodora Tronsdale. (Commended): Helen Derry, Vere Hunt. (Pass): Sylvia Dallaway Wilton.

Seniors (Commended): Helena Joy Maule, Viola Wild, Vera Urquhart. (Pass): Joyce Abbott.

Adults (Commended): Edith Hawes.

THE DOWNS SCHOOLS, PRESTON PARK,

NOVEMBER 27th, 1926.

CERTIFICATE CLASS.—Juniors (Honours): Ella Mogford. (Commended): Olive Scarce, Dorothy Thompson. (Pass): Marie Thompson.

Seniors (Honours): Irene Levy, Norah Standon. (Commended): Dorothy Smyth, Muriel Norris, Norah Adcock.

Adults (Honours): Eve Malcolm.

BRONZE MEDAL CLASS.—Juniors (Honours): Veronica Fowler, Betty Odling. (Commended): Maude Townsend. (Pass): Joan Norman.

Seniors (Special Distinction): Sylvia Cunningham, Mollie Winmill. (Honours): Mollie Crust, Mary Stevens, Nora Gray, Betty Scarce, Kathleen Adcock. (Commended): Lily Mogford.

THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4TH, 1926.

CERTIFICATE CLASS.—Junior (Special Distinction): Joan Pepper. (Honours): Joan Priddy, Rosalind Bourne, Marjorie Davey, Gladys Page. (Commended): Ida Steele, Eileen Jones, Betty Balfour, Hannah Cohen, Marjorie Allwright, Hilda Skodnick, Elsie Newnham, Marjorie Ashton, Joan Guillaume, Elsie O'Meara, Joan Langley, Geraldina Finnigan, Doris Andrews, Maxwell Bennell, Elsie Scragg, Ronald Stratton, Eleni Hadjiyanni. (Pass): Daphne Robinson, Eileen Mary White, Eileen Harris, Evelyn Wilde, Marjorie Giles, Joy Hansford, Della Hart, Piave Angelini, Annie Kounis, Eileen Sharp, Stella Dempsey, Pearl Langdon, Denis Stratton.

Senior (Special Distinction): Ursula Blackwell, Doris Giuntini. (Honours): Mary Eleanor Thurston, Elizabeth Eliot, Ena Ses. Cassandra Thresher, Joan Barber. (Commended): Olwen Yeoman, Myra Bergeman, Margaret Wilde, Kathleen Stringer, Eric Robbins, Ruth Neate, Susie England. (Pass): Constance Chapman, Janet Phillips, Frances Bothwell-Botton, Jean Vickers, Iris Hamlin, Eileen Tregunna.

Adult (Honours): Edith M. Mason, Lucretia Boggia, Lily M. Griffen.

BRONZE MEDAL CLASS.—Junior (Honours): Marjorie Griggs, Peggy Wilson, Janet Penwarden, Ruby Dowden. (Commended): Gladys Smith, Barbara Hendy, Margaret Goodwin, Evelyn Back, Joan Browne, Geoffrey Williams, Hetty Hall, Leonard Daniel Wickenden. (Pass): John Charles Davies.

Senior (Special Distinction): Janet Fletcher-Porter. (Honours): Milly Offenheim, Gladys Grimsdick, Eileen Joy, Eluned Griffiths. (Commended): Margaret Middleton, Sylvia Gallant, Frances Barnett, Clara Smocleare, Maud Bix. (Pass): Grace Thomas.

Adult (Special Distinction): Olwen Thomas, Mary Moore. (Honours): Peggy Sheldon, P. Ball Wade. (Commended): Marjorie Smith, Phyllis Burrows.

SILVER MEDAL CLASS.—Junior (Honours): Brenda E. Bolding. (Commended): Reita Cohen, Bella Jacovsky. (Pass): Cecilia Cochever, Joyce Edwards.

Senior (Honours): Beryl Pring, Sally Romer, Phyllis May Goetzee. (Commended): Margaret Elizabeth Myers. (Pass): Ruth Lofts.

Adult (Honours): Peggy Hodge, Mary Blothner, Stella Griffiths, Emily E. Holmes, Lucy Murphy, Millicent Bailey, Joan Waddington. (Commended): Agnes Townsend Eagle.

SOUTHAMPTON, December 11TH, 1926.

CERTIFICATES CLASS.—Junior (Honours): Katchie Christie. (Commended): Olive Bradshaw, Ruby Butler, Jean Graham, Eva Raynor.

Senior (Honours): Molly Boyle, Joan Cleveland, Gwen Davies, Betty Gradidge, Margaret Hopkins, Vera Rosenberg. (Commended): Eileen Ford, Mary Hall, Emily Holtom, Peggy Ray. (Pass): Molly Abley, Betty Brookes, Florence Curran.

Adult (Pass): Cynthia Holtom.

BRONZE MEDALS CLASS.—Junior (Honours): Diana Mackenzie, Ettie Savage.

Adult (Commended): Sadie Duggins.

SILVER MEDALS.—Junior (Honours): Margaret Wiltshire. (Commended): Russell Harwood, Joan Ingle. Senior (Honours): Mary K. Arnold, Sheila Aylward, Audrey Barden, Brenda Hart, Margaret Russell, Muriel Scott, Ruth Withers. (Commended): Doreen Butt, Dorcas Margaret Hunt.

Adult (Special Distinction): Gertrude Farthing, Janice Faull, Doris Thurgood. (Honours): Phyllis M. Cox, Lily Jeavons. (Commended): Barbara Bishop, Flora Buckett, May Giles, Freda Stiles.

THE BERMUDAS

I

UPON the bosom of this quiet tide
Like scattered blossoms the Bermudas ride
At ease, and with gay, smiling, coral lips
Tempt havenwards the weary sea-bound ships.

Here tree-begirdled, deep in lemon groves,
Ceaselessly-murmuring doves
At orison
Make elfin the far sea-mew's bitter cry
That down the breeze still lingers on ;
And from this glade, athwart the sapphire sky,
White wings by day and bats at midnight glide . . .
Perchance still bearing Ariel and his band
To shell-strewn bays and rainbow-skirted sand.

Here, surely, Eve, outcast and wandering far,
Dried her slow tears and ran from tree to tree
Calling to God in ecstasy
To see this bud that glitters like a star
Or breathe the fragrance of this stream-fed flower,
And after, in the night's first hour,
Stood hand in hand
With Adam in this Eden-haunted land
To hear soft-breathing like a child asleep
The chiming cadence of the guardian deep.

A. DORIS L. WILSON.

II

Sunlight, gleaming on sapphire sea,
Silver sands, where pink corals lie,
Emerald palm-heads, tossing free
Glistening fronds on a cloudless sky.

Here is the Land of Faerie !
Of icy splendours in tropic caves,
Where elfin music mysteriously
Echoes across the imprisoned waves.

From stately cedars peeping through,
And over rock and velvet lawn,
The "Morning Glory" spills its blue,
In rapturous greeting to the dawn.

The red poinsettia stars the groves
Beyond the oleander trees,
Where blue-birds carol to their loves,
And scent of lilies floods the breeze.

Bays, where long turquoise pathways roam
On amaranthine purple seas,
And far reefs gleam with sun-kissed foam,
Riven and whipt by the salt sea breeze.

Sea-glens, where bright-hued "Angels"* glide
Through terraced coral waterways,
And red sea-grasses sway in the tide,
Over purple-fringed anemones.

Night, on a shadowy star-lit sea,
Where fiery fishes come and go,
Bathed in the lambent mystery
Of Neptune's lanthorns wavering below.

HILDA McDONALD.

III.

A path that ends above the sea,
A patch of bloom, a dewy lawn,
Soft shadows of a wind-swept tree,
The Isle of Ocean greets the dawn.

Here shines a bubble strand of spray,
Where little Zephyrs naked run,
And through the branches slip and sway
The shadow-daughters of the Sun.

* "Angels." The celebrated bright blue "Angel Fish" of Bermuda.

A glowing chamber of the South
Where wings of Eros downward sweep,
But here his kiss on Psyche's mouth
Shall not avail to break her sleep.

Yet in that dreamer's quiet breast
Is the loud pulse of ocean heard,
"Sweet waves of peace, eternal rest,"
From dank sea-ledges shrills the bird.

Gracious and old the wonders are
Of Love's abyss ; so pay thy vows
Within the Gardens of the Star
Where silence hangs from myrtle boughs.

Where darkness from the cedar falls
And through the thicket voices cry :—
"Welcome : in life's green-pillared halls
"Thy youth and blossom shall not die."

For on this beach, where tempests drave
White coral wrack from ocean-floor,
When Cytheræa left the wave,
Her shell, forgotten, swept ashore.

Sweet pollen, blent with dim perfume,
Make hot the blood, when leaf-buds swell,
For walking lonely, deep in bloom,
Queen Love comes back to find her shell.

And round her feet on plumes of myrrh
The baby Zephyrs naked run,
And, dancing through the orchard, stir
The blue-robed daughters of the Sun.

WINIFRED M. COUSINS.

IV.

Fair isles of loveliness, like clustered flowers
Unfolding in the sun, till night shakes down

A shower of stars upon thy sea-wreathed town,
 And lights a thousand lamps in rose-fringed bowers,
 That flame like torches set in coral towers ;
 In crystal caves, ghost draperies are blown
 Like cloudy scarves around the moon's gold crown,
 While mortals dream of Heaven through popped hours.

Sea gardens bloom with iridescent sheen,
 Their watery beds starred with anemones ;
 On coral terraces the sea-fans lean,
 Gay fish, like fireflies, light dim shrubberies.
 Down wave-roofed avenues of limpid green
 Enchantment flutes eternal melodies.

EDITH M. WALKER.

V.—ON THE SOUTHERN SHORE.

The long trades blow and blow,
 And the surf is like drifted snow ;
 And the red-birds croon and croon
 Through the bright blue afternoon,
 And the palm leaves sway and swoon,
 And the cactus blossoms glow.

Never a sail goes by
 Under the cobalt sky ;
 Never the dip of an oar,
 Only the drift-weed hoar
 Here by the southern shore,
 And the gray gulls circling high.

Only the sand-like grain
 In the curving coves where the rain
 Of the spray upon it streams,
 Giving it golden gleams,
 While the day drifts out in dreams—
 Dreams of the Spanish Main.

CLINTON SCOLLARD.

WHAT IS POETRY ?

MANY so-called definitions of poetry have been advanced—some by poets, some by critics, some by those who are neither poet nor critic. And yet there is none which seems entirely satisfactory. Our main charges against these definitions are that often they are themselves poetry, and often, too, rather emphasise a particular aspect than embrace the whole subject. A definition, we contend, even of poetry, must be scientific. A mere description is not enough ; and the words used in the definition must be capable of application *only* to the subject defined : must mark it off from all other reality : must tell us (1) what it is ; and (2) what precisely distinguishes it from everything else. There are, it is true, some statements which almost fulfil these conditions, but there is none which is not open to objection. Above all, there is none which is generally accepted. We humbly submit that it is possible to define poetry, to define it in a brief and lucid manner, *scientifically*—in a definition not open to objection.

In the first place, let us clear the ground a little. The term *poetry* is often used in a very wide sense ; it is applied to human action, to life in general, to each one of the arts. Such a usage is quite intelligible, but leads to confusion. We may, in a very true sense, apply the term *poem* to a beautiful woman, or painting, or piece of architecture or music. With poetry thus regarded this paper is not concerned. It is concerned only with poetry which has been recorded verbally—we mean the poetry written by Homer, Sophocles, Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Goethe, Keats, Shelley and others. If our axioms should be disputed by any, our only reply is that, in forming what appears to us to be the only rational synthesis, we have been forced to them by an analysis of what is universally acknowledged to be great poetry.

At the outset, it is clear that poetry belongs to a well-defined group which we call *the arts*. With the other members of that family it has much in common, but it is also clear that it has its distinguishing mark. What is common to each of the arts ? What, which nothing else

is, are they? For us, they are just an expression of emotion. (The intellectual and the moral may be portrayed, but always as subsidiaries.) While emotion is essential, its *expression* may not be haphazard; it is governed by certain fundamental laws, any of which being violated, the result is not true art.

What are these fundamental laws of expression? They may all be summed up in the single word *artistic*, but for clearness, and to avoid the charge of a vicious circle, this term must be resolved into its constituent parts. An emotion is, we contend, artistically expressed when something true, new, and *supremely* beautiful is given to the world. Falsehood, being a negation, cannot be the basis of art, while the divinest dreams of a poet, removed as they apparently are from the world of reality, have, nevertheless, a basis in truth. They have had, at least, a real existence in the mind of the dreamer, and they reflect some truth of experience. In fact, it might, with great reason, be argued that these apparently flimsy dreams are the most enduring possessions, for while empires totter and decay, and civilisations are shattered, amid the tumult and turmoil of existence dreams remain as our inalienable heritage.

Nor is truth of expression of emotion sufficient; the effect must be also beautiful, and who can tell what beauty is, any more than truth? *Quid est veritas?* asks the philosopher, and asks in vain. *Quid est pulchritudo?* asks the artist. Yet we can recognise beauty when we meet it; and can acknowledge one principle as fundamental—harmony; and for supreme beauty in poetry and music rhythm is superadded to harmony. Harmony implies proportion of parts (form)—a commensurateness of the whole to the emotion expressed, and of the parts of the whole to the whole itself. Harmony does not connote rhythm, and so rhythm constitutes music and poetry a distinct sub-group within the family of the arts. This rhythm is a reflex of the universal rhythm to which we live and move. We are, each of us, the whole pageant of man, marching through life to the rhythm of a vast *marche funèbre*.

Finally, a work of art must present something new—must be a *creation*, not, however, of material, but of combinations of old materials. The idea of a star is as old as man himself. The idea of a waggon is almost as old. Yet it remained for Emerson to combine two ideas so remote, and by doing so, to express an exhortation almost as remote. He wrote: “Hitch your waggon to a star”—old wine, indeed, but in a new bottle.

Thus, art, in general, may be defined as the expression, in a new and supremely beautiful manner, of emotion-truth. While the supreme beauty of sculpture and painting depends on harmony, that of music and poetry requires rhythm in addition. To arrive, therefore, at our definition of poetry, we have merely to distinguish it from music. The difference is in the material, for while the musician makes use of wordless sound, the poet employs words as his medium.

Hence our definition of poetry: *the verbal and rhythmic expression, in a new and harmonious manner, of emotion-truth*. So the Odes of Keats, say, are poetry unalloyed. Pope’s *Essay in Criticism* or *on Man* is not poetry—they are verse merely, and to call the author of such verses poet is to misunderstand what poetry is and to besmirch the royal purple.

WILFRID MERRIFIELD.

A SONG OF THE SEA

FROM out the deep and distance where the day
 Stooped low to kiss the waters, ere the light
 Slid stilly into stars, beyond the bay
 Horizonward, drew slowly to the sight
 Majestic shoreward motion, undulating,
 Persistent, irresistible, pulsating.

As fuller breath attends the break of sleep
 When morning lays her hand upon the breast
 So sighed the conscious bosom of the deep,
 Bestirring to the might of strange unrest.

A moaning dome arose and sobbing sank ;

A summit caught the day ; its noble head
Advanced with polished brow—a stately bank
Of sea-born dignity sky-haloèd.

Serenely pressing shoreward, loftier arched
On bases sunk profounder to the sand,
It uttered muffled drumming as it marched
Triumphantly melodic to the strand.

Deep troughing and high doming, lustier singing,
Forelaurelled victor with prophetic green,
Bowing, it spurned the frothy bubbles, flinging
A port to heaven, cerulean, hyaline.

Tripped on the earth it fell ; the clamorous shore
Repelled its music with discordant screech,
The undefeated with defiant roar
Unshouldering its burden on the beach.

Hissed to the deep and distance whence it wrought,
The mocking shingle danced ; scorn's pæan rang
Along the marge and died, as moonlight caught
A lingering echo of the song it sang,—
A shattered cadence which bestrewed the hour
With vocal silences of mystic power.

The beach was nobler lifted than before ;
There lay some whitened pebbles on the shore ;
Some, wrought from rugged nature smooth and round ;
A castle built by coral-worms was found ;
Frail mollusc habitations, whorl on whorl
Bedight with walls of iridescent pearl ;
And, challenger to doubt of reverent creeds,
A woven miracle of wonder weeds ;
Last, in a crystal cranny, calm and cool,
The Galaxy at rest upon a pool
Where twinkling ripples tinkled as they willed
On hummocks levelled low and hollows filled.

As daylight slept I watched the deep awaking ;
When night arose I felt the billow breaking ;
But when both day and night to sleep were gone
I heard the Ocean's voice, and dreamed thereon.

VICTOR BALLAN.

THE POETRY OF GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO*

POETS are of various minds. Some of them are looking on the deeds and achievements of men, and living amidst the realities of everyday life ; but some are dwelling in enchanted lands with those beautiful phantoms whose eyes are mirrors of all the love and sorrow of the earth, with those eternal shapes in whose eyes, as treasures gleaming under the waters of fairy lakes, the passions and the beauty of the world are shining with an everlasting starry light. Carducci and Pascoli belong to the former ; to the latter D'Annunzio. Carducci never was able to forget in the ecstasy of song mankind and its struggles, while D'Annunzio, in a higher sphere, sets on nature and art and the world of men a diadem of beauty, a diadem adorned with the finest gems of imagination, and whose metal is the ardour itself of the poet's soul.

His art is a night-flowering plant, whose purple chalices can only open in a sultry deep-scented gloom. There is a stillness in his imaginary world, the stillness of every true poetical world, which is indeed a world beyond the actual world. He is not content with mere perceptions, but he is refining upon them and getting from them the subtlest emotions. Images arise, ever-changing and new, struck from the sensation, like rainbows in a fragment of rock-crystal. Feelings and moods are transformed into images, and each figure and metaphor bears the seal of his mind. In this state of soul everything becomes a symbol. It is as in Whistler's *Nocturne in Black and Gold* ; the flaming catherine-wheel in the gloomy garden becomes an image of human life, a token and a sign of our short, and yet glorious flaming out on this earth ; and the red-gold sparks, wind-driven in the murky sky, may they not be taken as emblems of souls wandering in the spaces beyond the gates of Death ?

Being endowed with an exquisite sensitiveness to all

* Being part of a lecture given before the Poetry Society (Kensington Centre) on the 19th of September, 1926.

beautiful shapes and sounds, he is eager to thoroughly grasp, and to render as vividly as possible, the essence and truth of the perception; and his phrase corresponds with perfect fitness to the sensation in all its shades. While to some poets, to Coleridge, for instance, and to Poe, their visionary world is far more vivid than the material one, to D'Annunzio his imaginary universe is as vivid as the earth; both are to him equally *real*. All things, both in the exterior and in the inward world, are seen by him in a bright illumination.

Giving music a larger share in poetry than is usual, he shows a predilection for words of fine sound and resonance, and he trusts the mere sound of the words to express what really lies beyond the power of words in so far as their meaning is concerned. Therefore his poems give us the exaltation that comes from beautiful music. The world is made unreal, and, as it were, changed into a marvellous symphony. His lines often are rich mosaics of sounds; and yet his lyrics are never mere arabesques of sound, as is the case with some French symbolists; their meaning is always clear and distinct. A cadence, a chord of rhymes, is sufficient to call up a mood, to evoke an image. While we listen to one of his songs we find that moods have been transposed into harmonies, and landscapes into magical patterns of sounds. The poet can find—to use Coleridge's phrase in *The Aeolian Harp*—"a light in sound, a sound-like power in light," colours and sounds melting and blending imperceptibly into one another.

In the *Laudi* he employs new effects of sound, such as only a trained master of the language can find out. The sonnet *La Visione* is a good instance of fine chords in rhyming and of broadly sweeping rhythm.* It is no more

* Quasi era a mezzo il dì. Presso e
Sontano il fiume sorridea come a' belli anni.
Si placavan nel cor tutti gli affanni
per quel candore immenso cristiano.
Ed io vidi la riva del Giordano,
e splendere Gesù ne' rossi panni,
qual fiamma che s'inchina, e a lui Giovanni

than a strain of music. No more. But what magic, what power in these words, although their meaning is almost shadowed under the burning wings of the melody!

From the outset he had proved himself a master of harmonies in words; indeed, as Coleridge* says: "Imagery, affecting incidents, may all be acquired. But the sense of musical delight, with the power of producing it, is a gift of imagination." The beauty of sounds is kept up in long modulations, as if they moved under echoing arches. The translation can, of course, only give a very pale idea of the original. It is indeed as if some wonderful azure-purple tropical butterfly were represented in black and white; gone are all the changeful fascinating hues.

Though made up of unconnected lyrics, his various books of poems—*Vere Novo*, *Intermezzo*, *La Chimera*, *L'Isotteo*, *Poema Paradisiaco*, *Elegie Romane*, *Le Laudi*—give us a unity of impression, each of them having its own atmosphere, its own keynote.

The *Isotteo* is like a fifteenth-century arras, where the central figure of Isaotta Guttadauro is surrounded by exquisite arabesques and allegorical figures. His marvellous technical ability is nowhere seen in better light than in

sparger l'onda sul capo sovrumano.
Ora, andando io così lung'h'esso il fiume
pio (non so qual bontà muta nel sole
spirava il mondo), l'albero e l'arbusto
m'eran fratelli. E in tal beato lume
e in tal silenzio udimmo le parole:
Convien compire tutto quel ch'è giusto.

The day was almost at its midst. Near and afar—the river was smiling, as in my beautiful years.—All griefs fell asleep in my heart—through that immense Christian candour.

And I saw the bank of the Jordan,—and Jesus glowing in His crimson robe,—like a flame that bends down, and St. John pour down the wave on His divine Head.

Now, as I was going along the pious river,—(I do not know what dumb goodness was breathed by the world in the sunshine),—every tree and shrub was my brother; and in such a blissful light and in such silence we heard the words:—All that is just must be done.

(From the *Poema Paradisiaco*.)

* *Biographia Literaria*, London, Dent, p. 167.

this poem, as he employed here a very difficult metre—the “nona rima” or nine-line stanza—a metre used in an allegorical poem of the fourteenth century, *L’Intelligenza*, attributed to Dino Compagni. D’Annunzio wrought it out with the fineness of texture of the *Stanze* of Poliziano, lavishing in its various parts his wealth of melody, and breathing over the whole subject the romantic glamour of William Morris’ *Earthly Paradise* and of Walter Crane’s drawings.

The *Roman Elegies* are a sequence of poems in the form of the classical elegy. In the elegy the poet found the right means of expression for his mood, the fittest metrical form with its slow undulations and dying fall, with its long resounding melody broken by the sobs of the recurring cæsuras, as the whole book is instinct with a tragic feeling, being a complaint or threnody on a dead love.

The Chimaera—(the emblematical title of the winged, fire-breathing monster gives us the symbol of the restless human aspirations, consuming the heart with infinite longing)—shows D’Annunzio’s genius in its full splendour. In *The Chimaera*—as in *Intermezzo*—we are shocked by a sensual element, love very often lapsing into sensuality. But even then we hear in these morbid lines a sound of nostalgic weeping, the yearning of the soul towards the Azure. In many of these poems he is aiming rather to a pictorial effect than to deep emotion. There is in these lyrics a fine lucidity and clarity of colour, and he preserves the limpidity of the outlines among the interlacements of the richly coloured images. Not seldom he adopts foreign subjects, Persian or Japanese, so as to introduce into his lines a breath of fragrance blowing from exotic gardens. We are struck by the magnificence of the whole book, which is indeed like a gold casket set with translucid enamels, or a magic sphere full of brilliant colours. Several of these poems show the influence of the French Parnassians, of Gautier, and Leconte De Lisle, and, above all, of D’Herédia; he imitates the Parnassian style in the full chords of the rhymes, in the preciousness of the language, in the firm chiselling of the line.

Nous, qui ciselons les vers comme des coupes, had said the young Verlaine. But, although his word-paintings bear reflections of foreign masters, his burning passion for beauty gives his lines a charm whose like we never had felt before.

The *Poema Paradisiaco* is a strong contrast to *The Chimaera*, the external imagery of the latter being turned into inward imagery in the former. There is a violent change of atmosphere; from a sky of brightness we come into a mauve twilight; from the sharp outlines of a sunlit land we move into the glimmering depths of endless perspectives; the country of gem-bearing trees is now steeped in the bluish pearly haze of dream-gardens. The thought of ideals unattained, of art and love unfulfilled, is haunting the poet.—“Art, O awful one, as yet—thou hast not unveiled thyself to us; we have adored thee in vain.”—“Beloved, alas, you have died too young; we waited for you in vain.”—“Behind us there remains only a barren, wry, short furrow;—Glory, we shall die in vain.”

These poems are flowers culled from invisible gardens and stained with strange fire. Poetry is here a pale proud princess, adorned with opals, and coming, as Poe’s “Sleeper,” from mysterious seas. We are in desolate gardens pervaded by dream-perfumes; and figures are listening to the low-voiced fountains—pale figures, as if lit up by the dying flames of an ancient passion—figures that vanish imperceptibly, as sunset shadows are lost in the purple mist of evening. “Gardens for ever closed,—of which we had hardly a glimpse,—or on which we gazed for a long while through the railings,—gardens that never a hand opened to the wanderer gone astray as in a dream,—gardens enclosed, churchyards without tombs,—where perhaps is roaming some lover’s ghost—following the shadow of his lost happiness.”

“The beautiful garden seems secretly to recede into times far away;—the fountains, lustrous with an opal glimmer,—make in the silence sweet and strange sounds;—in the rose-bowers the roses, exhausted, are falling,—they almost do not shed fragrance any more.—The soul is

ping with languor ;—vain dreams are coming back, dreams of times that are no more.”

And a lady is sitting at the open window, in the twilight, looking at the autumnal trees, listening to the sobbing of a source among the tall cypresses ; “ and she, who was listening intently, falls asleep—at that voice that yonder there is complaining,—is complaining at the far end of the garden.—It is only the voice of water on stone,—but how many a time heard, how many a time ! ”

Wan figures are passing—memories rather than real presences, but as vivid as hallucinations—at the sound of ancient music. “ Airs of times far away,—you that in some secular mansion—were played on the virginal, so sadly, by hands so white, . . . O, pass through these vain dreams, airs of times that are no more.”

It gives a sense of poignant nostalgia, as the scent of dead leaves being burnt in autumn evenings, poignant with a pang of anguish and inexplicable sadness. It has the quiet, calm, and yet so intense sorrow of the first *tempo* of Beethoven’s *Moonlight Sonata*. A deep pàthos is in the lyric *Consolazione*, one of the finest poems in D’Annunzio’s work.

“ Do not weep any more ; the beloved son is coming back to his home ;—he is tired of lying.”—“ Come, let us go out into the garden ;—it is for you to flourish again ;—you are too white ; your face is almost a lily.”

“ Come, let us go out. The deserted garden still keeps for us some path. I shall tell you how sweet it is, the mystery that veils certain things of the past.”

“ A few roses are still on the rose-trees,—some timid herb is still spreading its fragrance. All the deserted garden will smile, if you but smile. . . . ”

“ All shall be as in the past time ;—the soul will be simple as it then was ;—and it will come to you, when you like,—as lightly as water comes into the hollow of the hand.”

The translucencies of the *Poema Paradisiaco* change in the *Laudi* to a fierce splendour. In them—as in the *Odi Navali* and in the *Canzone di Garibaldi*—there burns a

deep love of Italy, a love which the poet has expressed, not in words, but in gallant deeds in the war. In the impetuous rhythms of the *Laudi*, in these sun-splashed canvasses, the tone is again quite different from the harmonies of the *Chimaera* and *Poema Paradisiaco*. Breaking the traditional rules of Italian verse, he employs in these books of poems a kind of "free verse." The *Laud to a Destroyer*—Frederick Nietzsche—may be cited as an instance of vigour and power both in rhythm and thought with the daring swing of its lines, with its free, and yet perfectly harmonious, metrical structure. But we feel bound to notice that this group of later poems is now and then spoilt by rhetoric, the poet singing sometimes—as Swinburne did in his later work—for mere enjoyment in the ring of words, without any ground of new images and heartfelt thought.

The work of D'Annunzio has deeply influenced the Italian poets of to-day. It had on them the effect which Walter Pater so finely speaks of when, in *Marius the Epicurean*, he describes the impression produced on Flavian by the new style introduced by Apuleius.* And his influence on Italian writers is not a passing one.

FEDERICO OLIVERO,

della R. Università di Torino e Catholica Università di Milano.

IN DISPRAISE OF LEARNING

WHY should I glare
At lines on a book ?
Is there nothing more fair
For a young man's look ?

Has library dust
The heady scent
Of the grape's red must
With sunshine blent ?

* Book I, Chapters V and VI: *The Golden Book, Euphuism.*

THE POETRY REVIEW

Is it phantasied sound
 Makes the blood rejoice
 With a stag-like bound,
 Or a maiden's voice ?

What a dull way this is
 To clutch at a thrill
 When love-ripe kisses
 Might bend to one's will !

No, here is the art
 For the truest sage :
 A song in the heart
 Is worth ten on the page.

CHARLES WHARTON STORK

NOSTALGIE

TO watch the blue skies underneath the arch,
 Fading and deepening,
 And all day long the sunlight on the stone
 That sets it blossoming
 At noon more golden than the daffodil,
 At evening dark as winter violets,
 And bluer than the field-anemone.

To hear again the old and early cry
 Of street-sellers at morning, in the grey
 Uncertain hours of a December day :—
 To roam the Tuileries gardens hour on hour.

To walk the white
 Wide Place de la Concorde, on a clear night,
 Where the stone fountains gush their ice-to-be.

To watch the blue skies gather under the arch
 That dimly flowers
 With blossoms, deeper than the deepening hours ;—
 To watch the night skies under the great arch
 That frames the clear stars and the indigo,
 And the unfallen snow.

EDNA A. KAHLA.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI AS A POET

IN all the arts to-day there would seem to be a moral strenuousness. It is heavy ; it is serious ; and it is super-sensitive to criticism. It resents advice. And it is becoming singularly mid-Victorian—but in quite a different way !

To start with, it lacks humour. There was humour in a period that could produce Dickens, Thackeray, Trollope, and Reade in the camp of Literature ; and Maclise, Holman Hunt, Madox Brown, and Landseer in the realm of Art.

To-day, however, both artists and literary men, especially poets, take themselves with appalling seriousness. The lack of self-criticism is not so fatal as the lack of self-derision. Without humour all art must become barren.

No one who has stood at gaze before a canvas of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, either in the National Gallery at London or in the Municipal Art Galleries of the larger provincial towns of Great Britain, will be likely to forget his instinctive shock of distrust when first he viewed the work of this strange man of genius.

“ Morbid ! ” he probably murmured within himself. No other ejaculation could so well express his suspicion of something both unnatural and unusual.

Rossetti's brush-work was stamped with pre-Raphaelitism mainly because of a sluggish languorousness, a sensation of spiritual “ stodge,” and an exotic striving after colour-effect. These make his pictures feverishly different from those of his fellow-craftsmen in the pre-Raphael school. Burne-Jones, Holman Hunt, and Madox Brown, at least, were virile, where Rossetti was merely soul-weary and mentally discontented.

Those mournful eyes, deep with mystic dreams ; those over-red and sensuous lips ; the mysterious brass-gold of the flowing hair ; the unhealthy pallor of that “ fleshy ” flesh—all these characteristics of Rossetti's canvases impress the mind unpleasantly with a studied and insolent urbanity—the stubborn philistinism, born of suppression,

which characterised the antimacassar and heavily carved furniture of 1830-1860.

The Rossetti woman is unforgettable. She is all the more dangerous because of that fact. One feels instinctively that Rossetti was essentially antinomian. Everything in life that he surveyed was seen through a constipated temperament—men, women, nature, the whole of the universe—all beheld through hectic glasses of the Morbid and the Bizarre.

Did he ever, one wonders, retire into a corner to have a laugh at himself? Did he ever, even for a few brief minutes, forget that he was Dante Gabriel Rossetti, born of Italian parents in 1828, and in his early 'twenties already famous both as a poet and as a painter? Had he ever *doubted* his power to achieve?

Creators of thought, in no matter what form of the plastic arts, who have never doubted themselves may be *genii*; but they are, none the less, dangerously self-opinionated!

Turning to his verse, one seeks in vain for that clear bugle note that should characterise true Poetry. When Emerson cried to mankind—

So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near to God is Man,
When Duty whispers low, *You must*,
And Youth replies, *I can!*

something beautiful has been born. The heart responds instantly. Once and forever a message has been given to the struggling human soul. Accepted and understood, that message may never be forgotten!

But when Rossetti tells us in the finest lines from *The Blessed Damsel*—

Around her, lovers, newly met,
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remembered names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames,

there is left on the mental palate of the reader a cloying sweetness that leaves little indeed to turn it into nausea.

Rossetti was in rebellion against life. The just man bears most easily what he knows to be the result of his own indiscretions. But Rossetti was never just—especially to himself and to his own talents. He did not think deeply, but he felt with an intensity that became at the last sheer morbidity. He had tremendous command of literary technique. Under his skilful handling the *Sonnet* acquired a force that had scarcely been known since the death of Wordsworth.

Yet take Wordsworth's *The World is too much with us* ; compare it with one of Rossetti's sixteen-lines delineation of a mood. The difference, the incredulous difference is the contrast one feels and recognises between a rose of the woodland and an orchid of the tropical forest—the difference between Beauty and Parasitism.

This is lovely—but lovely only as an orchid is lovely—

Your hands lie open in the long fresh grass,
 The finger-prints look through like rosy blooms ;
 Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams and glooms
 'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.
 All round our nest, far as the eye can pass,
 Are golden kingcup fields with silver edge ;
 Where the cow-parsley skirts the hawthorn hedge,
 'Tis visible silence, still as the hour-glass.

Deep in the sun-scorched growths the dragon-fly
 Hangs like a blue thread loosened from the sky :
 So this winged hour is dropt to us from above.
 O, clasp we to our hearts for deathless 'dow'r
 This close-companioned inarticulate hour,
 When two-fold silence was the song of love !

The trained mind is inclined to exclaim, "Tapestry !" For even that beautiful piece of work leaves the heart unsatisfied. The mind is irritated, rather than comforted ; and the reader's thoughts envisage an over-stout dreamer, taking his negligent ease. Poetry, the free, the joyous, the untrammelled, demands the fervent nature-worshipper,

alert, keen, well exercised, kneeling to adore the golden day!

The depression of moral carelessness, felt in the presence of Rossetti, is easy to understand when we examine his ancestry. To his parents, and to his weird surroundings, must be ascribed that morbid quest for Beauty which was never really natural, and which ultimately became an obsession.

From earliest childhood he was steeped in the artificiality of excessive sentiment. His family came of pure Latin stock; and his mother was a gloriously gifted woman, whose nature can best be read in the lyrics of Dante's sister, Christina. The contrasts between the poems of D. G. Rossetti and of C. Rossetti—found, generally, side by side in anthologies—startle and confuse. For Christina had learned to deny herself, whereas Dante seems always to have been indulged and gratified in every possible way.

In later years, when wealth had crowned his posturings, and when he had had accorded to him a glut of adulation, his tendency toward generosity became so marked as to savour of childishness. His craving for sentimentalities was more than womanish. We are shown by his contemporaries on many and many an occasion, the poet-painter lounging on a sofa, while a dozen doting admirers—members of the female sex invariably—flattered and cajoled and charmed him to his heart's inordinate content. In this wise, his mental and spiritual horizon became utterly tainted by the Morbid and the Unusual.

Yet, on the occasions that he sought to be sincere, he could touch both hearts and brain. Here is a very fine sonnet.

What is the sorriest thing that enters Hell ?

None of the Sins,—but this and that fair deed

Which a soul's sin at length could supersede,

These yet are virgins, whom death's timely knell

Might once have sainted ; whom the fiends compel

Together now, in snake-bound shuddering sheaves

Of anguish, while the pit's pollution leaves

Their refuse maidenhood abominable.

Night sucks them down, the tribute of the pit
Those names, half entered in the Book of Life,
Were God's Desire at noon. And as their hair
And eyes sink last, the Torturer deigns no whit
To gaze, but, yearning, waits his destined wife,
The Sin still blithe on earth that sent them there.

Rossetti was a man of such complex character that the evil reports in circulation about him during his lifetime afforded him only amusement. Robert Buchanan castigated him in a book called *The Fleshly School of Poetry*. But Rossetti's skin was not thin ; and he was never acutely hurt by innuendo. These accusations, he knew, were more a protest against his work than against his mode of existence, lavish and extraordinary though his habits were publicly known to be.

His house had now become a veritable Old Curiosity Shop. Rossetti would buy absolutely anything that could claim to be unusual, no matter how embarrassing it might afterwards prove as a possession. The catalogue of effects issued at his death reads something like the probable announcement of a sale at Christie's after a financial failure of the house of Jamrach !

Rossetti's domestic quarters accommodated strange beasts and birds, jostling their way through priceless china and glass. Pictures and embroideries shared the same rooms as live saurians and enormous reptiles. There were oriental carvings and tapestries, almost obliterating a superb collection of insects from South America and from Central Africa. Relics of notorious criminals were grouped among original manuscripts and etchings and drawings from the pen, the pencil, or the brush of this strangest of all human *genii*. And up and down his staircase drifted callers from all ranks of society.

Rossetti could be the most profoundly interesting talker, whenever he happened to be caught in the mood. But that mood seemed only to be engendered by a crowd of women-worshippers. Too well had he understood the weakness of his own nature when he wrote :

Eat thou and drink ; to-morrow thou shalt die.
 Surely the earth, that's wise being very old,
 Needs not our help. Then loose me, love, and hold
 Thy sultry hair up from my face ; that I
 May pour for thee this golden wine, brim-high,
 Till round the glass thy fingers glow like gold,
 We'll drown all hours : thy songs, while hours are toll'd,
 Shall leap, as fountains veil the changing sky.

Now kiss, and think that there are really those,
 My own high-bosomed beauty, who increase
 Vain gold, vain lore, and yet might choose *our* way !
 Through many years they toil ; then on a day
 They die not—for their life was death,—but cease :
 And round their narrow lips the mould falls close !

That may be beautiful English—but it is insidiously wrong philosophy ! It lacks even the abandonment of riotous old Omar Khayyam, the drunken singer of the wine-shop. Rossetti's voluptuousness leaves a taste of *amour au rebours* on the palate of the reader that is most distinctly unpleasant.

Now all this is not to say that Rossetti was not possessed of a fine personality, could he only have been true to his better nature. Had he but adjured that leaning toward morbidity which taints so much of his work, he might have achieved the spirituality of his sister Christina. Maybe one asks too much ! One is demanding, as it were, the clear white light of electricity from the cavernous hollows of a coal fire.

The lyrical work of that abnegating soul who wrote *When I am Dead my Dearest*, and *Does the Road Wind Uphill all the Way ?* will survive that of her brother for many generations. Christina Rossetti never married.

The love-affairs of Dante Gabriel might not adequately be told inside the compass of a dozen Mudie novels ! Without entering into further detail, let it be recorded that he married, at the age of thirty-two, Elizabeth Eleanor Siddal. She was supremely beautiful, and most splendidly gifted. Algernon Charles Swinburne loved her dearly.

Two years after her marriage to Rossetti she gave birth to a stillborn child—and died herself.

The shock to the poet-husband was a terrible one. He was greatly attached to his "darling Elizabeth," in spite of the many love-affairs in other directions that had preceded the union. Into her coffin he dropped a crumpled manuscript—the hundred poems that had been inspired by her love for him.

Fourteen years later, under the pressure of friends, he permitted the poems to be exhumed. They were published and lost nothing in popularity by the romantic story of their past. One of the finest of these sonnets expresses *Regret for Lost Yesterdays*.

It may be regarded as the keynote of Rossetti's complex nature :—

The lost days of my life until to-day,
 What were they could I see them in the street
 Lie as they fell ? Would they be ears of wheat
 Sown once for food, but trodden into clay ?
 Or golden coins squandered and still to pay ?
 Or drops of blood dabbling the guilty feet ?
 Or such spilt water as in dreams must cheat
 The undying thirsts of Hell, a thirst alway ?

I do not see them here ; but after death
 God knows the faces I shall see,
 Each one a murdered self, with low last breath
 " I am thyself,—what hast thou done to me ? "
 " And I—and I—thyself ! " (Lo ! each one saith),
 " And thou myself to all eternity ! "

Surely that sonnet shows that Rossetti had the inner daring to distinguish the real from the sham ? He lacked the moral courage consistently in public to take his own measure. Had he lived to-day he would doubtless have been president of one of those little societies, high-brow and futile, which are formed for mutual self-worship, and to which we referred in our opening paragraph. But he would not have been content unless, week by week, he had found the crescendo of adulation more convincing

than he had ever known it to be before ! His vanity would have starved among the few real poets—for there *are* a divine few !—of our period.

Because of insomnia, Rossetti commenced at forty the pernicious habit of drug-taking. Chloral was his favourite form of poison. His last years were unhappy. He suffered from increasing megalomania, and had soul-tormenting delusions, and he died on Easter Day 1882, at the comparatively early age of fifty-four. He had been known to an immense circle of artists and literary men, whose work, in lesser or higher degree, bears the impress of his weird personality.

There was not, howbeit, one of them but was acutely aware, with a show of half-hidden resentment, that Rossetti had been far too much lacking in the essentials of broad humanity to become a classic. The bolder and more individual of them, both in Art and Literature, broke from his influence. They became themselves—with the result that both Literature and Art owe a tremendous debt to the Brotherhood of which Rossetti was never a fair example.

For the poet-painter belonged to an even earlier period than that with which he had become so intimately associated. He was sixteenth-century, Italian, medieval, sub-tropical, and strangely reactionary. His particular "school," hectic, feverish, and morbidly unhealthy, is now, thanks be ! almost wholly cleansed away from the records of British Art and British Literature. It cultivated the hot-house Beauty of the Harem, in contrast to the natural Beauty of the Open Field.

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

* * *

In sending us some verses in English intended to express how Shakespeare appeals to the Oriental mind, Pyun Yung Tai, of Seoul, Korea, tells us : "I am a Korean who has never seen an inch of any English-speaking land, but English literature has for many years been my chief source of pleasure, and I often try to write poems in English."

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE CHILD STUDY IN POETRY

THE story of this branch of literature is but a page of that great chapter, "The Child in Poetry," which in its turn is only a section of the whole volume, *The Child in Literature*. It is of special interest to-day, however, owing to the increased output of this class of writing of late years. We are even apt to think of the child study as a modern invention, whereas although it has reached a fuller stature within recent times, its beginnings can be traced far back through the centuries, a thing quite apart from other poems dealing with child life in various aspects, as, for instance, the lullaby, the poem of recollection of one's personal experience, and the poem which regards the child as the unconscious philosopher of life. The child study proper interprets to us the mind of the child, and remarks not merely its actions, but also the thought that prompted them. It is the result of acute observation of the child blended with a childlike and understanding sympathy of another realm of thought.

Some men, in recalling their own childhood, have caught a gleam of that ethereal light that illumines the child's world. Traherne and Longfellow both remember how small the world seemed because the known part of it was but a corner, but how infinitely good it was too. Longfellow, looking out through space to those other unknown worlds, longed for wings to catch a star, and seeing the moon, he thought :

" O were I on that island there,
I could find out of what the moon is made,
Find out how large it is, how round, how fair."

He recalls his childish prayers and how, with the catholicity of childhood, he prayed for all the town, from the king to the old bent beggar. Traherne remembers the imaginary wealth of the early days, the spiritual possession of the young soul. Laces and jewels were not the less his because others wore them. This reminds us of Stevenson's picture :

" ' And all about was mine, ' " I said,
' The little sparrows overhead,

The little minnows too.
 This was the world and I was king,
 For me the bees came by to sing,
 For me the swallows flew.'"

Sometimes it is but a word that shows us as in a flash the thought in the child's mind, as in T. E. Brown's "Dora," where, visiting the grave of her little brother, she lays her ear to the turf, that she may hear whether in that dark place childhood still plays. Coventry Patmore's list of a little boy's playthings is in itself a revelation of a child's taste in toys. Charles Tennyson Turner in "Letty's Globe" sums up in a few words the child's love of home. Letty looks gravely at a globe of the world, but when her eyes are turned to England :

"Oh! yes, I see it, Letty's home is there."
 And while she hid all England with a kiss,
 Bright over Europe fell her golden hair."

And above all, is there anything in literature to rival those few but precious words of Mat Prior's about "the child of quality, five years old," "Dear Five-years-old," telling how she makes beds for her silk-worms with his tender rhymes?

One of the earliest attempts at a child study proper, putting the words into the mouth of the child itself, is "A Child's Grace," by Herrick, hardly a happy effort. It was Blake who first made the child study a living thing in such poems as "The Little Black Boy," and "The Nurse's Song," where the children beg to stay up later. This must surely be accounted to him for great righteousness, that his great spirit was simple enough to grasp the essence of a child study. Hogg, in "Billy and Me," gets the right atmosphere also, so that we feel almost as great an interest in the absent Billy as in the speaker himself. Nor must we forget him who was great enough to give us Mamillius with his very proper pride :

"You'll kiss me hard and speak to me as if
 I were a baby still,"

and with his eerie story, "There was a man—dwelt by a churchyard."

Wordsworth errs on the priggish side in his child studies, but there are redeeming touches as when the brother exclaims about the strawberry flower:

“Do not touch it! summers two
I am older, Anne, than you.”

The grief of the little girl who has torn her coat we can understand. But in “Anecdote for Fathers” and “We are Seven” we are irritated by the stupidity of the adult mind. The child realises the great truth that death can never divide from those we love, and the abominable grown-up persists in trying to destroy a most delicate fancy. The proud parent presses his little boy to say why he prefers one place to another. Embarrassed, the child blurts out an answer,—probably an untruth told in self-defence, in order to keep the real reason from prying eyes. It is Dorothy Wordsworth, in “The Mother’s Return,” who gives us a real piece of character study. The brother, in his gladness, calls his mother aloud, careless of the fact that she cannot hear, and shouts to bring her nearer. The little sister chatters incoherently. They turn and hug the baby. Then they talk of all the things that have happened “Since Mother went away.”

Jean Ingelow’s child studies deserve greater attention than they commonly receive. She can tell of the misery of Katie, only seven while Oliver is a proud eleven, and of her artless questions, “Was Echo a wise kind of bee that had learned how to laugh?” Will she ever be married in church with a white gown and flowers to walk on? Oliver thinks not. The church is so old that it will hardly last till then. “Seven Times Seven” contains the delightful thought about the moon being in disgrace because her face is hidden. Like “Echo and the Ferry” it dwells upon the importance of increased age to the young. “The Child and the Boatman” and “In the Nursery” are the masterpieces, however. They are as a child really talks. How natural that a child should ask who makes all the songs, or dream that in heaven the little angels wear their best frocks every day! It is natural her doll should accompany

her, and that when she asks Bob if he is sure he saw the queen in a dream that he should retort indignantly :

"Of course, she had a crown
Upon her, and a purple spangly gown."

This dialogue form favoured by Jean Ingelow is very successful. We get a sight of it in "After Blenheim" in little Peterkin's practical question, "But what good came of it at last?" and little Wilhelmine's comment, "Why, 'twas a very wicked thing." The modern trend has been towards the monologue form. R. L. S. was its first great master. He learnt to see the obvious and commonplace through the child's eyes. He realised that the child never dreams he will change with changing years. As a man he will be able to tell others not to meddle with his toys. He thinks that will be the only difference. He is full of wonder about the world without, and the little boats "a-boating."

"Away down the river,
A hundred miles or more,
Other little children
Bring my boats ashore."

And Saint Paul himself said the same in another way. "One soweth, another reaps." And it is in "The Unseen Playmate" that Stevenson becomes the child's mystic. Surely this Friend of the Children who takes care of the toys at night, and plays French at the game of soldiers, is none other than the "Little Jesus" of Francis Thompson, who played in heaven with the young angels, with stars for marbles; for even in heaven there must be play, and the universe itself is to a child, or to the poet with the eternal heart of a child, but the nursery of heaven and the playground of Eternity.

M. SCHOFIELD.

[Previous articles on this subject in THE POETRY REVIEW have included "Childhood and Modern Verse," by Jean Nankivell (July, 1924), Mrs. Alston's "Children and Poetry" articles (1919), "The Child in Verse," Mr. L. S. Wood (1922), and Mrs. Winder's "Poetry for Children" (January, 1924).—ED.]

WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?

A REVIEWER of volumes of verse, being always maligned, might be tempted to enquire in Gilbert's words, "Am I a man on human plan Designed, or am I not, Matilda?" the public here standing for the stern "Matilda." Let it be allowed that he is human, for he alone knows what inward joy arises in his soul when true poetry "swims into his ken." The small inland seas of personal emotion evoke a mental upheaval which is closely akin to that bodily sickness caused by a crossing of the Channel in stormy weather, a greenness which mistaken onlookers call envy, but which is nausea, pure and simple. Now sea sickness is regarded by persons of levity as a joke, but we never met a sufferer from it who considered it a laughable matter. If, therefore, a tossing of waves produces a loathing of even life itself, how far deeper must a mental nausea go?

In the near past it was a joyful experience to adventure over the great calm ocean—calm by reason of its depth, of Laurance Binyon's *Sirens*, and to-day we can fancy that we float on a placid river, and are urged by sheer exuberance of spirit to shout aloud, as we wander through the volume of verse by V. Sackville West, *The Land* (Heinemann). This book has received already such deserved meeds of praise from critics that little remains to be said.

I sing once more
The mild continuous epic of the soil,
Haysel and harvest, tilth and husbandry;
I tell of marl and dung, and of the means
To break the unkindly spirit of the clay;
I tell the things I know.

And this she does with marvellous observation and accuracy, but with something more: for, whilst saying that a poet can scarcely care to "shed a poet's cloak, and cede a birthright," she claims that birthright and flaunts that cloak in all the many allusions to "Myth, glamour, hazard, fables dim as age" as in the lines—

Dark was the ilex in the Grecian vales,
Crooked the olive, murmurous the lime.

THE POETRY REVIEW

No woodsman but had heard the Dryad cry,
 No girl but knew the goat-foot faun was nigh,
 And saw the satyr through the branches leer.

Birches, frail whispering company, are these ?
 Or lovely women rooted into trees ?
 Daughters of Norsemen, on a foreign shore
 Left hostage.

Her pæan of the Kentish soil is shot through and through with poet's lore—a lore all unknown by husbandmen and tillers and ditchers. It is the *Land*, but a land that has passed through the crucible of a poet's heart. The "Mantuan" was more simple. It is a great work, although the miseries of the labourer and the cramping prejudices of the farmer are overlooked, and wisely so. She paints a fair landscape and adds vignettes of country life and labour; there are two living poets [to speak only of two] who would have given us ugly details about the crowds of invading hop-pickers, and would not have let us escape minute descriptions of the beastliness of an occasional drink-sodden harvester. For this abstinence thanks be—we float on, singing.

Dignity in demeanour and in Poetry is at a discount in these latter days; to ape simplicity is not to be simple, ny more than to be merely bizarre is to be original, *The and* moves in a dignity that W. H. Davies apparently despises. The old song of "Sally in Our Alley" is as innocent of artifice as could be demanded by any long-haired advocate of unadorned verse, whereas W. H. Davies in *The Song of Love* [Jonathan Cape] reveals an aping of simplicity that is as studied as any artifice of polished workmanship:

When I was rich without a care,
 And lived with wandering men—
 My belly spread across my back
 Was all my bed-clothes then

But when I say a house is mine
 The tax-collectors come
 To show man is poor indeed,
 Who keeps a little home.

And this—

And though I scorn a painted skin,
Think not my tongue could scold her,
Should such fair things as butterflies
Encourage her to powder.

And yet again this—

The Kiss of Love is half a bite,
And worth a thousand others ;
Girls who have no desire for that
Should never leave their mothers.

Now, certain it is that the artlessness of a little child gives pleasure, but when it is imitated by a grown man we are fain to suspect garrulousness, or sham. There is the water of rivers, of great seas, of ponds, and water flows also in gutters. Alack!

* * *

It is a significant fact of the times to find so many writers, both in prose and in poetry, occupying their pens in a portrayal of the supreme central figure in religion. We had *The Nazareen*, that fine original work ; and now comes a large volume, entitled *Christus Victor*, by Henry Nehemiah Dodge [G. P. Putnam's & Sons]. Where Allen Brockington pictured the Nazareen in His human aspect, in happy and hopeful ministration moving amongst fellow men, Henry N. Dodge writes only of the eternal overwhelming power of Christ ; Victor over all death, whether it be death of the body or the soul. The aim of the work is to assure sorrowing humanity that no soul can be lost, for any such lost soul would prove that Christ was not supremely Victor. It is written with fervour and with an adoring reverence and therefore merits respect. We could wish for our own part that the illustrations and the general effect did not so much resemble that abhorrent thing, to literary minds, a Gift Book, this may possibly commend it to some, but it does not need these adornments ; many of the poems will become as dear to religiously minded persons as those of Keble's "Christian Year," and they are, in the main, more virile than Keble's verses. Taking the old accepted idea, he says,

Men in their hearts despise this Mighty One,
 Powerless to guide the souls that He has made.
 How many brave, unselfish ones have grieved
 For those they loved through sin and shame, though dead
 In unrepented sin, and without hope,
 With broken hearts, have longed to go to them,
 Careless of Heaven, if they might share their fate—
 So noble and so strong is human love.

The author cannot and will not receive this aspect—

O Christ, have our poor feeble minds conceived
 A work too mighty for Thy saving power ?

And after developing his argument, he cries—

Ah, never sank a sinning soul so low,
 But God's paternal hand could deeper go
 His perishing child to save.

How shall I set a limit to His grace ?
 How dare I cloud the glory of His face ?

We can but admire the devotion given to this work. The poems are not, of course, all on the same high level, and a little pruning would have been wise, but it is a good, honest and uplifting piece of work. Following, as it were, upon these lines, Frank Kendon has written *A Life and Death of Judas Iscariot* [John Lane]. He attempts to explain the actions of the betrayer apart from the motive of covetousness—the latter part of the poem is more convincing in this than the former. There are many passages of great charm which reveal the poet's feeling for natural scenes. It is original also in depicting Judas as a man of wider intellectual capacity than his fellow disciples ; it draws him as a man of bitter nature for ever rending his own feelings. Mr. Kendon has succeeded better than most in his portraying the sacred central figure, but one line jars : he puts these words into the Lord's mouth :—

Oh that you might but burn with fire within,
 Not warm your hands at my poor fervour thus.

Since the quarrel of the priests was roused to flame

because the Lord refused to belittle Himself, these words strike false. But the poem is welcome as a work of thought and dignity, and a charm that may not rise to supreme beauty, but is, nevertheless, a charm.

* * *

We recall how E. D. Frazer said of some Scotch verse that they were “in your poorer English.” Well, we suppose we must accept this as we accept the many gibes hurled at us by Irishmen and Scotchmen, whom politeness forbids us to call arrogant in their attitude toward “poor” Englishmen. It is affirmed that the wail of the bagpipes will drive Scotchmen furiously into battle. We can well believe it; the sound of them causes us also to desire wildly to slay our nearest and dearest. So with Scottish poetry, what is a “poor” southerner to make of this:—

Or new diversion o’ the hormones
Mair fond o’ procreation than the Mormons,
And fetchin’ like a devastatin’ storm on’s
A’ the uncouth dilemmas o’ oot natur’
Objectified in vegetable maitter.
Yauk oot your orra boughs, my hert!

After this we cheerfully acknowledge that *A Drunk Man Looks at a Thistle*, by Hugh M’Diarmid [Blackwood & Sons], is altogether beyond us. The book contains, it is true, a glossary, but who can appreciate a poem in a foreign language if frequent applications have to be made to so unpoetic a thing as a dictionary? We can only assure Mr. M’Diarmid that we did try “to mak’ a kirk o’ it, but we canna hae a strang o’ geylies joy o’ it”—and there it is.

* * *

Americans occasionally alter the spelling of our “poor English,” but on the whole we speak the same Mother-tongue, and from the Ryerson Press come two chap-books, *The Prophet’s Man*, by Geoffrey B. Riddehough, and *Spring in Savary*, by Alice Brewer. Geoffrey Riddehough’s imagination is a virile thing. He has lived, as it were, in his Prophet’s man, the tired hungry servant, regarding his master’s rhapsodies with weary but kindly tolerance, himself a rank idolater, and yet he says:—

And this alone I know ;
 If I depart his God will let him die.
 So—for he is my master—I remain.

And you vision him dirty, emaciated, scornful, but faithful to the lone prophet among the bleak inhospitable rocks. The sonnet, *Conceit*, touches as in colour a truth untouched before—also *After Noontide* is a haunting picture drawn with a most admirable reticence and compression.

Somewhere it has been said that a poet's true vocation must be revealed before he passes the five and twentieth year of his life. So be it ; but must it then follow that all youthful writers are to be fed with encouragement in the form of publication in order that a weary public may say whether or no they be poets ? You cannot go a voyage on Kensington Round Pond unless you are no larger than a flea. Why should we be urged to attempt it ? We are told that the authoress of *Spring in Savary* is "a first-class amateur actress, a singer of charm, a musical critic of keen discernment, and a clever writer of prose and verse." Happy and versatile lady ! (one wonders, incidentally, how you criticise keen discernment musically ?) Perhaps these varied accomplishments have absorbed most of her mental strength, for there is nothing in this volume that is more than pretty, and in it we hear again that O ! so wearisome cry :—

My wounds, they would not heal.
 And none knew why ;
 Naught could my pain conceal—
 I fain would die.

Can no one persuade these yearning creatures, who would appear to be more wounded in the heart than ever St. Sebastian was outwardly with arrows, that their death is merely their own affair ? It may possibly concern their immediate circle, but even those comprising that circle might be glad to be relieved from perpetually wondering why wounds did not heal. As to the world it would continue to roll on cheerfully, if heartlessly.

We still turn our eyes toward America, watching for the master poet that may arise from the vivid interest and

awakened love of poetry that stirs her land. Is it that life there is too full of petty and time-absorbing interests, so that the poet cannot find that silence in which genius can fulfil itself ?

Hamish Hendry voices this waiting in *Poems English and Scottish* [Blackie & Son]:—

Loud have I prayed
That some uncouth, wild prophet-voice would rise
Chaunting an iron song : a bard mad-wise,
Whose cry would shrill across your jingling sweet
Trills, like cannon-music to victorious feet
Trampling where nautch-girls danced ; a radiant bard
Whose songs were light though heaven were all unstarred !
Yet he comes not !

And he asks as we ask, sorrowfully :—

Has she
Whose glory made the mighty Masters blench
Become, to-day, each strolling mummer's wench,
Dancing to lightest tunes ? Answer me true.
Poets I chaunt for you !

[“Masters,” of course, standing here for the bull-headed tyrants of the world.] May his cry echo throughout the concourse of poets ! Mr. Hendry sings manfully and merrily himself : *The Nor'land Sea* is a dream-haunted song appealing to all who remember the sunlight of their earlier days. He avoids old clichés, and in him there undoubtedly abides a strong singer of whom we desire greater things. This is true, also, of Lewis Spence, *Plumes of Time* [George Allen]. His own stanza shall be his judge :—

He that re-shapeth his spirit in flame and in thunder—
He shall stand up with the gods and the god-like for ever.

It is this flame and this thunder that is absent altogether from much of modern verse. Too many believe that if they describe a moon-lit night or sunset glow on water, in lines that do not transgress laws of rhythm, that then they must be poets. In their lines the nightingale and the thrush, like the poor, are ever with us. Even

W. H. Davies drags in that overworked Philomel, crying, "The Nightingale shall wonder much, To hear my love in tune." [We should not be utterly overcome with astonishment if she did "wonder" amazingly.]

Lewis Spence has a pretty lilt on the finch :—

From the heart of the finch
God's rapture ran—
Joy in an inch
Song in a span !

Pretty, if it can be imagined that the Almighty's rapture could be confined in an inch ! It is the efforts sometimes of poets themselves that are measurable in inches. For what can be said (with any regard to polite speech) of the thirty-six four-line verses which make up Part I, and the fourteen eight-lined ones called Part II of *Quest*, by Eleanor Slater ? And yet the Yale Press, in publishing these, preface the slender volumite with "only such verse as seems to give the fairest promise for the future of American poetry" is sent out from them. "Seems"—well, Longfellow said—"things are not what they seem," so per-adventure Eleanor Slater's cry of—

I live my life in paragraphs,
Punctuated by surprise,
But cannot tell till afterwards
The phrases to italicize.

may promise something. Certain it is they do *not* promise sense, or melody, or correct versification. All we can see is a kind of "Jack-in-the-Box," which, if it is possible to be punctuated by surprise," may have that strange effect.

In *Solomon and Balkis*, by John Freeman [Macmillan and Co.] we are on flowing rivers once more. Whether or no it will prove altogether pleasing to many to hear the Sacred Name so interwoven with legend and Arabian-Nights'-like extravagances is a question each must decide for himself. Mr. Freeman oddly, and with careless audacity, travesties the Bible records and yet includes these lines, lines which must carry a deeply solemn meaning to most hearts :—

that Hill of stone
Might bear the form of David's greater Son
Hanging on high, upon the bloody Cross.

These words embedded in light fantasies of Djinns and magic carpets, and a wise Hoopoe, are as if, during a wild Pantomime, Death suddenly set his frozen seal on every grimacing face and posturing figure. The contrast would shock, not please. The workmanship is good, the lines are musical, and the fancy of Balkis and her love is full of beauty. We should enjoy the whole far more if Mr. Freeman had omitted the Name of the Almighty and that human Sacred Name of “ David's greater son ” from a tale as fantastic and dream-like as is *Kubla Khan*. If to retain reverence and a sense of awe is to be “ mid-Victorian,” then we are, with Tennyson and Browning, “ mid-Victorians,” and are not ashamed.

ARTHUR HOOD.

TEA-TIME IN MARCH

THE fire is lit, and through my homely room
The shadows break before the leaping flames,
Curtains and polished wood and picture frames
Are warmly burnished in the crimson gloom.

Upon the table, where the firelight spills
Its radiance, my china cups are spread,
And little cakes, and plates of snowy bread,
And crystal vases full of daffodils.

And so we wait your coming, Dusk and I,
But yet I leave the kindly lamp unlit,
The windows open to the night, and sit
Facing the fading saffron of the sky.

Across the pallid east like twisted bars
Are spread the boughs of barren trees, while, still
As souls before a shrine, forest and hill
Await the nightly miracle of the stars.

And I am shaken with wild questionings,
 Watching the branches where a wisp of moon
 Hangs like a silver flower—out of tune
 My spirit seems with all familiar things.

You, when you come, will talk of trivial themes
 Over the daffodils beside the hearth ;
 Like a dark door the littleness of earth
 Will close on the enigma of my dreams.

The fire is clear, the table waits for tea,
 Down the dim road you seek my friendly walls—
 But from the twilight the Eternal calls,
 Tempting my inmost soul away from me.

NANCY POLLOK.

THOUGH THESE HAVE FAME

THOUGH these have fame, I through their books have
 dreams.

Thus have I seen.

And these are mine from all that might have been :
 That lovely town of blossom, rich in thought
 Dante in exile from his sorrow wrought ;
 The racing Tiber that to-day still swirls
 About the golden feet of Roman girls ;
 The spires of Carthage, drifted now with sands,
 Sown seven times with salt by ruthless hands ;
 That white-walled Troy where lovely Helen's pride
 Murdered the Trojan youth on Simois' side.

And with Odysseus I have watched the day
 Grow pale like olive-trees that fade to gray,
 And gathered shells on Æea's sunny sand
 Or played with Circe's beast enchanting wand.
 And I have dined with queens and supped with kings
 And known their secret thought's far flutterings,
 Walked with wise men, and wandered back again
 Sharing the crusts of simpler, poorer men.

. . . Though these have fame, I through their books have
 dreams.

A. DORIS L. WILSON.

WHERE CREATIVE WRITING IS EPIDEMIC

AN English Course, to many students, is unrelated to their personal love of books. They have precious moments in reading which they would never consider baring to their instructor; they have no understanding, no explanation of their enthusiasm for this or that fine writing, no real companionship in their taste. In fact, to them, English is a thing apart—detached, impersonal, often split up or distorted unrecognizably. But, from this point of departure, they are expected to accomplish unstilted creative work and develop acute criticism.

This situation marks, for me, another argument (and I know of three persons who exemplify this argument) that all grammar *can* be studied when taking up the Latin language. Scansion, parsing, principal parts, all which is necessary to English can occur at this time. Latin should come early, should come before all other foreign languages, being their forebear. Such hours as are given over to English literature can then *be* English literature—one long joyous serious orgy of reading, omnivorous delight making forever sacred innumerable books instead of a few, now taken up and worried into bits.

It is gratifying to know that one such long orgy seems in progress at the Lincoln High School in New York City to which Dr. Otis W. Caldwell, Director, has invited the work of Mr. Hughes Mearns. The book *Creative Youth* by Mr. Mearns (Doubleday, Page) sets forth what they are doing and cites enough of resultant creative work among the pupils to justify their methods. It is now a focus of observation among educators throughout the States; and what goes on there is in the nature of a prophecy for the future of American writing. Poets like Mr. Untermeyer, Mr. William Rose Benet, Mr. Braithwaite, Mr. Robert Frost and many others are in hearty sympathy with the ideals at work there. And—such untraditional ideals! Here is no definite course of study (the young people adopt their own); wide unsupervised reading; much creative writing with no laws indicated; a teaching corps whose leadership is that of “seeming withdrawal” from any question. But, Mr. Mearns states, “the secret of our results lies in the environment which we as teachers skilfully and knowingly set up day by day and hour by hour.” “Permitting native impulses to play without shame or impertinence is in itself an art.” “Start with what you have and be patient.”

The first part of *Creative Youth* is one delightful setting forth of cases and facts drawn from a close knowledge of young people—first-hand psychology, with amazing inferences, which sums up many teaching difficulties and drastically makes way with them.

Mr. Mearns knows the appetites of youth and spreads before them the proper "baits" to lead them on and on to "green fields and pastures new" always ahead of a true lover of books. He admits to placing "right in their path a cleverly stocked and cleverly arranged school library." It is a stimulus from which grow committees for findings and sharings that mean much intergrowth of thought and occasional mass upheavals of enthusiasm. Later "the authorities come in, but always after experience has made the authorities understandable."

At no time does he say that poetry is a more delicate gift to bring to them than are the general school subjects. But all his approaches are so tactfully planned, his contacts and successes so precious! He well knows "the ground whereon he stands is holy ground." In the home, it would be different. A parent often knows from close companionship how much to say or how little to bring about a confession or an illuminating feeling which may mature from the intangible into individual expression whether in character or artistic expression. There can be intuition guided with an understanding built of sources generations old, with a sincerity which invokes responsiveness, with comprehension of attendant circumstances, and especially—a keen faith!

But in the Lincoln School Mr. Mearns seems to have achieved all these elements and to have added group advantages as well. For committees meet or classes are held "on the fly" so to speak, whenever they get "heady" with some question and must talk, whether in between classes or during other classes. The young people are tracking down enthusiasms day after day. They read to the point of needing to free themselves of contagious creative impulses and they discuss and live into so much of their own and the best of other writers that the eight pages of books cited as reading basis for their programs, or their entertaining wise book-notices, all sound consistent and as a matter of course.

Mr. Mearns quotes a mother as saying, "I rejoice that the Lincoln School has made poetry one of the manly sports. My boy and his boy friends talk and dispute over poetry as they would over any other natural healthy interest."

After reading the reprints from the Lincoln School magazines, which include the writing of the High School group and the younger grades, one agrees with the statement that the work of Hilda Conkling, Helen Douglas Adam (of Scotland) and Nathalia Crane is "a natural and appropriate performance which seems exceptional because the creative work of other youth has not made itself

generally known." The reprints are "a serious illustration of a faith that a higher grade of artistic achievement is possible than is commonly permitted by the schools."

Of rightful importance is the development of the reading of poetry as an Art. Members of the Poetry Society who have interested themselves so generously in this training in the English schools will sympathize with this quoted paragraph. William Inglis, of the editorial board of Harper's magazine, was present when "the chairman rose to read *The Crystal Gazer*. She was a good reader, always accurate, clear and thoughtful; she did everything with marked intelligence, but this time she was unwittingly to perform a miracle.

"Something expectant in her quiet bearing, in her eyes—they had grown strangely luminous—in the slow movement of her hand as she gently turned the page, something held us before she had begun. In consequence her first line was given in the most perfect of all silences, that silence within a silence, when not only is every bodily movement of the audience stilled, but their minds seem to stop all conflicting vibrations and willingly surrender to attention. She read :—

I shall gather myself into myself again,
I shall take my scattered selves and make them one,
I shall fuse them into a polished crystal ball
Where I can see the moon and the flashing sun.

I shall sit like a sibyl, hour after hour intent,
Watching the future come and the present go—
And the little shifting pictures of people rushing
In tiny self-importance to and fro.

"Eight lines and it was all over. We settled back, somewhat startled at what had been done to us. . . ." It amuses me to think that this one-time member of the editorial board of Harper's strode up to the girl and, waving a finger at her in an eloquent gesture of approval, talked excitedly, "I saw Booth do that once! Just what you did! Before he spoke a word he had a mob of indifferent people in a spell. He did things to them that night—to me—to everybody—as you did just now. And a marvellous thing you did! Marvellous!"

Small wonder that the students write at the depth of their mood or experience when they can so well entertain the moment of another writer, and perhaps have a feeling of how it came about. I could

quote any one of the representative verse to bear out my meaning. Here is *Tired Water* by Anna Pappenheimer :—

I hear it
Playing on the roof,
In April
With a soft sweet sound.

I hear it,
Jumping down the rocks
Like silver
With a long glad bound.

I hear it,
The swelling, tossing ocean
In March
Showing its fangs with a roar.

Rearing
In a high blue ridge,
White capped,
And beating on the shore.

The brook
So wise and so silly
So musical
Like cold crystal—at home.

Tired water,
Enslaved by man to work
In mills,
Struggling for freedom, cannot roam.

After being in the atmosphere of the Lincoln High School, Nathalia Crane (of the Brooklyn High School, I understand) seems just another person who is freed in her world of words and line and rhythm. She is distinctly herself in her singing acuteness, her elfish insight and her whimsies of wisdom. The rhythms are youthful, almost singing in iterated measure, but of a leaping, mounting vitality that has little to do with the Kipling we thought to meet once or twice in her pages. Such eerie smugness, such surety of line, such delight in form—an arch illusiveness long after the poem is told!

I did not need to have troubled your attention in January with

the notice of *Forms of Poetry* (Untermeyer). Here she is, balancing what it held for her, turning it about and about and shaking everything out of it.

The Forms of Poetry by Untermeyer ;
Olympus in a ladle on the fire.

He summons wizards from their old resorts ;
Red robed they come with armfuls of retorts,

They pluck the forge and anvil from their sleeves,
Shake down enchanted charcoal from the eves.

Two gnomes appear with necromatic ware—
A first-line balance and an end-line flare.

The bellows roar, the dwarfs the embers trim,
Forth comes the cup that never had a rim ;

The flask of oil marked to anoint the mole,
The wings the tortoise spreads within his soul.

The golden ropes they rigged in Homer's town,
The Lesbian surge, the sway of Dante's gown.

The wizards stir the formulas afire,
Out of the ladle steps the seven-stringed lyre.

HELEN HARTNESS FLANDERS.

* * *

Apropos this article by Mrs. Flanders and the series dealing with young people and poetry, it is pertinent to note that a serious attempt has been made in America to deal with youth's poetic self-expression on a serious basis, somewhat similar to the direction and encouragement for many years a feature of THE POETRY REVIEW, a phase of our activities especially commended by Mr. Rawnsley in his letter in our last issue. "An earnest group of teachers formed an organisation known as 'The School and Poetry Association,' and under the guidance and inspiration of Paul S. Nickerson, himself a teacher and poet, it decided to issue a national periodical of student verse, for the purpose of encouraging the student to greater creative effort and kindling in him a deeper love of poetry and literature.

The Gleam has now a subscription list including more than 200 schools from all over the United States, public and private, all potential contributors and a large number actual ones. Any school which has membership in the association is eligible to send verse, though it must come with the indorsement of the teacher. In most instances some of the teachers are members, but sometimes a literary group or poetry club of students joins for the school." The *Christian Science Monitor* is impressed by the sincerity of effort evident in the student verse published in *The Gleam*, and proceeds to ask (and answer): "The purpose of it all? Some of us like to believe that, like beauty, it is its own excuse for being—the mere opportunity for self-expression for the joy that it brings to the writer. But if we wish ulterior motives, they are not far to seek. There is the sense of companionship among young writers, and their assurance of a friendly hearing all over the country. There is also the encouragement to the teacher of composition, and to the teacher of literature as well, because of the quickened and more thoughtful response of the pupil to all poetry—old and new. Actual writing of verse sharpens the perception, makes the response to beauty in all literature more eager and spontaneous, and at the same time more lasting; because it is grounded not on facile emotion, but intelligent understanding. And not to literature alone, but to the beauty of the world around us, merely awaiting the sensitive eye to see it, beckoning to all those who are ready to 'Follow the Gleam.'" We have justified ourselves with similar work and arguments for many years.

* * *

Again, *apropos* the above, a very unusual volume is *Almond Blossom: A Collection of Verse and Prose by Children of Tormead* (Sampson Low, 5s. net), edited by K. M. Johnston, who, without telling us very much about how the contents of this interesting volume by young people came into existence, says, "I have always maintained that it is possible for the average child to write verse, and I think this little collection goes far to prove that statement. Few children are colour-blind; few are tone deaf; the great majority enjoy the sense of colour, and the sense of sound, and in the same ratio are those who can write verse."

She makes out a good case for the encouragement of verse-writing by children, pointing out that "no one is so unreasonable as to insist that only great geniuses—the Shakespeares, the Miltons, the Dantes—should attempt to write poetry. Why should the privilege of expressing in verse things which touch the heart be confined to those who have studied the laws of prosody? Such limitations

would rob alike writers and readers of an innocent delight. Nature has room for her windflowers and buttercups, as well as for her Cedars of Lebanon, and there is sometimes as much real pleasure to be derived from the study of simple, natural and often charming verse as from the perusal of *Hamlet* or the *Divine Comedy*. And she further gives the following excellent advice, derived from an apparently voluminous experience, "Even if these children never fulfil the suggestion of their infancy, they will, at least, have acquired something that is going to be of inestimable value to them throughout the whole course of their life—a seeing eye, an ear which hears, a sensitive touch, and an imaginative understanding of nature, humanity and the Divine Plan of the universe which will go far to make them good citizens, and really helpful in the struggle which humanity is making through the darkness to the dawn.

"They will have, too, an ingrained love and appreciation for good literature—because I am sure that the impressions of tender years are the ones which ultimately triumph—and this will be a help and consolation to them when they encounter the trials of life ; and a source of pure joy for moments of leisured ease.

"To those who teach : open the books of poetry to your children, and 'Composition' will never again be a dull and tiresome lesson.

"To parents : read the songs of the world to your children, and watch the sparkle of joy in their eyes, which cannot fail to light a corresponding one in yours.

"To children ; learn for yourselves what the golden-voiced singers of all ages have to say to you, and remember poetry is as true as it is tender. This is what Sir William Watson said of poetry, and I think it is the truest description in the shortest space, of that vast subject, that I know :—

"Forget not, brother singer ! that though Prose
Can never be too truthful, or too wise,
Song is not Truth, nor Wisdom ; but the rose
Upon Truth's lips, the light in Wisdom's eyes."

* * *

DEVOTIONAL POETS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

The volume with the above title recently added to *Nelson's Poets* (cloth, 1s. 6d. net) is not only remarkable value in these days of high production charges but is a very desirable possession. It gives a comprehensive selection of the poems of John Donne, George Herbert, Richard Crashaw, Robert Herrick, Henry Vaughan, and Thomas Traherne, introduced in a scholarly, sympathetic manner by Sir Henry Newbolt, who points out that from the seventeenth

century alone have we received volumes of verse upon religious themes—so charged with sincere religious emotion as to be essentially independent of religious dogma. "The six poets whose devotional work makes up this collection are by no means all of the same rank, but they are all sincere, and though their allegiance was given to different schools of religious thought there is in their poetry little or nothing of a sectarian kind, in the controversial sense of the word. This common purity of temperament and the literary connection which exists between their work make it proper to consider them as a group, and even as a group characteristic of a particular century. We need not believe that human nature changes at every hundredth year and at no other time; but we may and must recognise that both art and intellect have their clearly marked tides. The poetry, and especially the more serious poetry, produced between 1610, when Donne began to publish, and 1695, when Vaughan died, is clearly distinguished from the typical work of the Elizabethan age or of the eighteenth century. And this is exactly what we might expect, for the period was one of prolonged religious unrest."

Sir Henry Newbolt is not a Traherne enthusiast. He feels that with his ineffective metres the tide is ebbing, but that the ebb is in no way to be regretted for other tides will break upon other sands of time. "The value of the sixteenth century devotional poets is not diminished by the certainty which we feel that we shall never again see their like. Herbert, Crashaw, Vaughan, and Traherne are none of them men of our time; we love their sincerity and the beauty of their voices, but we receive a part only of their devotional spirit, because they are speaking of religion, and religion is everywhere and under all forms a unique and individual relation—the ways to God are as many as the souls of men. The personal truth of these poets is that which remains with us: the point of view of a past age can hardly be our own, but sincerity will always be the first necessity of poetry. Herrick too belongs to the past; but his verse is imperishable. Time may destroy the contents of a poem, but a perfect form is inexhaustible. What Herrick took from Ben Jonson and from Horace may yet be the freedom of many poets in many years. Of Donne we must give a different account: his form of expression has stood between him and many readers. But he is nevertheless a modern poet, a man of our own time and of times to come, and at his greatest he has a power of expression which can only be described by saying that it is the thoughts of the imagination of his heart made audible. When there

shall come another religious poet as great as Donne, he will speak like him : not because the content or the form of his verse will be like his, but because those to whom he speaks will forget the content and the form in the reality of the experience."

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY IN YOUNG POETS.

THE American Society of Bookfellows has published a second Anthology by its poet members. It found its experiment in publishing by the subscriptions of contributors who took pains to make the book known the only effective way of adequately publishing new poetry by comparatively unknown people. In his preface to the second collection—to which several Poetry Reviewers are contributors, including Mary S. Fitzgerald, Leacy Naylor Green-Leach, May Folwell Hoisington, Marie Tello Phillips, Ruth Clay Price, Ruth Mason Rice, Washington Van Dusen, Franklin N. Wood—the Editor frankly explains the reasons for this particular form of co-operative publication. He admits that to publish means to give out to the world—to make public—and this involves not only printing an edition of a book but finding an owner and a reader for the copies comprised in the edition. All too often a small edition of a book of poems is printed, either at the instance of the author or otherwise, and the book-buying world, which is expected to respond appreciatively, proves indifferent, and the bulk of the edition languishes in somebody's cellar or on somebody's shelf, eventually to die of dust and mildew. Such a book, though printed, cannot be said to have been published, even though it bears a publisher's imprint on the title-page.

"The market for a book of poems is limited. The best-known poet feels highly flattered if he sells to the tune of a thousand copies. Potential purchasers are of course the author's relatives and friends, public libraries, persons who collect books of poetry or first editions or private presses, and the very few who buy and read him because they are attracted by what he writes. The latter is the group to whom the poet looks for his audience and to whom he addresses himself. In the case of a little-known poet this group is small; in the case of no poet is it very large, for the appeal of poetry is to the few. This group is in fact an extension of the circle of the poet's friends, for the 'constant reader' who buys the new book of a known poet does so because he has learned to know the poet's personality as expressed in his work and has learned to expect something of interest in the unfolding of that personality. This is no different from the feeling that now moves you to seek out and buy a book written by someone with whom you played bridge yesterday."

There is nothing new in this except that the Bookfellows are sufficiently numerous and energetic to make this method of publishing successful and sufficiently discriminating to apply it to really good modern work, and that Mr. G. S. Seymour is no hypocritical adviser, claiming commercial importance and value for something that does not possess them. From the hundred and fifteen contributors of from one to ten poems each, we can quote one only, and that on account of its being a tribute to an English author. Frank Belknap Long, Jun., writes *On Reading Arthur Machen* :—

“ There is a glory in the autumn wood,
The ancient lanes of England wind and climb
Past wizard oaks and gorse and tangled thyme
To where a fort of mighty empire stood :
There is a glamour in the autumn sky ;
The reddened clouds are writhing in the glow
Of some great fire, and there are glints below
Of tawny yellow where the embers die.

I wait, for he will show me, clear and cold,
High-raised in splendor, sharp against the North
The Roman eagles, and through mists of gold
The marching legions as they issue forth :
I wait, for I would share with him again
The ancient wisdom, and the ancient pain.”

* * *

When we give advice to thousands of newcomers into the realms of poetry who are stocking their libraries for permanent reading and reference, we recommend whatever volumes for their purposes to be found in the Oxford Editions of Standard Authors, not only because of the price but because of their authority and completeness and the style in which they are presented. The latest addition to these Oxford Books—*The Poetical Works of John Gay*—provides 700 pages, cloth bound, for 3s. 6d. net, and is practically a facsimile edition of the original editions, the title pages, capitals, italics, and other typographical details of these earlier editions being carefully reproduced, together with notes, bibliographical details, and other matter by the most qualified and thorough Editor—Mr. Geoffrey Faber—who supplies us with a complete and, as far as possible, an accurate text of all Gay's poetical works, including *The Fables*, *Trivia*, *The Beggar's Opera*, *Polly*, and other plays and operas.

A TENNYSON COMMENTARY:

III. THE INFLUENCE ON TENNYSON OF WORDSWORTH, BROWNING, MILTON AND HOMER.

It is always difficult to decide how far the work of a poet has been influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by the reading of other poets. Tennyson's work is so very individual that he can have owed little to any other man's mind; but no one who reads and thinks can escape being influenced in some degree, and the four poets under discussion, Wordsworth, Browning, Milton and Homer, all had a part in forming Tennyson's imagination and artistic methods.

Wordsworth and Tennyson were both poets of Nature, but Tennyson's love of Nature was so much a part of him that I do not think it owed anything to Wordsworth's. This element in the Lake poet's work naturally attracted Tennyson, and it seems possible that Wordsworth's example inspired Tennyson to write of the lives of simple country people. Such poems as *The May Queen*, *Dora*, and *Enoch Arden* might never have been written if Wordsworth had not first written his Lake-country idylls.

Wordsworth was an early influence, but Browning wrote contemporaneously with Tennyson, a new volume of each poet's work appearing every year or so. Tennyson read Browning's poetry, and it is known that he considered it too rugged in form, recondite in meaning, and deficient in music. Thus it is not likely that he would have let Browning influence him; yet *Ulysses* and *Romney's Remorse* bear a strong likeness in their manner of presentation to the blank-verse monologues of Browning's *Men and Women*, where historical characters, such as Andrea del Sarto and Fra Lippo Lippi lay bare their hearts as they tell part of the story of their lives. The opening of *Romney's Remorse* is particularly reminiscent of Browning's manner, and it may well be that Tennyson took the idea of a blank-verse monologue from Browning, as the Laureate's usual method was narrative.

Milton was one of the earliest poets to be read by the young Tennyson, and the study of Milton's blank-verse must have helped to form Tennyson's superb style. Traces of Milton's theology can be found in Tennyson's early poems, especially in *The Supposed Confessions of a Sensitive Mind*.

Tennyson was a Greek scholar, and he knew and loved his Homer. It has occurred to me that Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* may have inspired Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*. Homer welded the historical legends of his nation into two long poems; Tennyson gathered together the Arthurian legends into twelve Idylls, clothed

in language which makes them immortal. It is a striking fact that in each cycle the central figure, the cause of tragedy, influencing the destinies of so many lovers and heroes, is a woman—Helen and Guinevere.

K. MUNDAY.

III A.

Wordsworth's love of Nature and pastoral subjects were a great inspiration to Tennyson. Such pieces as *The Miller's Daughter*, *Dora*, *The Gardener's Daughter*, *Edwin Morris*, all carry on the Wordsworth idea of poetry in simple country life. His love of Nature as it is, and not as Pope and the poets of his day had painted it—artificial and unreal—was a great model of simplicity to Tennyson, who clothed his observations in more beautiful and poetic language. But the Wordsworth pastoral tells a plain story to bring out some moral and himself moralises thereon. Tennyson tells the tale and leaves it generally to point its own moral and does nothing to mar its simplicity. Wordsworth admired *Dora* intensely and said he had for years been trying to write such a pastoral and failed.

The influence of Browning is not so marked. They were two great contemporaries, and Tennyson's opinion of Browning that he was "a great thinker in verse, he has plenty of music in him, but cannot get it out; he has intellect enough for a dozen of us, but he has not got the glory of words," is an evidence that he was not consciously influenced by Browning. Yet he, too, as a thinker in verse found that sometimes his thoughts could not be expressed in musical words, and we find, especially in his later work, phrases which remind us of Browning. The Poems of Kapiolani, *The Dawn* and *Freedom*, may be mentioned. In the latter are rather strained rhymes, such as bathed and vapour-swathed, etc.

Tennyson, like Milton, had a great desire to write a great epic poem. Possibly, too, he took the idea of the Arthurian legends from the fact that Milton had himself thought of that subject and made notes with a view to it.

With all young classical scholars it is difficult to decide how far they have been influenced direct by the classical authors and how far from such a poet as Milton—who in his form is so imbued with classic methods, but in such expressions as

" So left alone, the passions of her mind,
As winds from the compass shift and blow
Made war upon each other for an hour
Till pity won"—

from *Godiva*, or

“Of love that never found his earthly close
What sequel ? Streaming eyes and breaking hearts ?
Or all the same as if he had not been ?”

we feel that Tennyson has read his Milton, but it is perhaps in his spirit that we feel it most—since both seem anxious “To justify the ways of God to man.” But Tennyson owed much to Greek literature direct. His subjects are often the old Greek tales from the *Odyssey*, which he said he preferred to the *Illiad*. His feeling for beauty was nourished on the old Greek sense of beauty, though he always tries to describe beauty in detail, whereas Homer describes its effects. *Ulysses*, *Tithonus*, *The Lotus Eaters*, owe their subject matter to Homer, and to some extent their form. Tennyson had the Greek manner of forming composite words, Greek epithets, very melodious and enriching to his poems, such words as lily-cradled, slow-thickening, many-towered. In the following lines we get an almost direct translation from Homer himself :

“Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly ; but it lies
Deep-meadow’d, happy, fair with orchard lawns
And bowery hollows crowned with summer sea.”

The Lotus Eaters is more Greek in origin than thought : the modern poet giving more prominence to the beauty of the place ; Homer the effect on the men. Tennyson often lets one point in a simile bring in a picture as Homer so often does, such as, from *The Princess* :—

“She read, till over brow
And cheek and bosom brake the wonderful bloom
As of some fire against a stormy cloud,
When the wild peasant rights himself, the rick
Flames, and his anger reddens in the heavens.”

ELIZABETH HICKSON.

IV. TENNYSON AS AN OBSERVER OF NATURE.

In a special sense of the word Tennyson may be said to be the greatest of our “Nature” poets. Few have ever been keener observers of detail ; few have been more susceptible to natural beauty. But in nowise is he a Nature poet in the sense that Words-

worth is; there is none of that "mystical sense of communion with Nature" which is found in the latter. Rather he is a poet with a great gift for the closest and most minute observation of Nature.

Perhaps the most famous example of this power comes from *The Brook*, where a girl's brown hair is described as being

"In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit within."

And this from *Geraint and Enid*:

"While some whose souls the old serpent long had drawn
Down as the worm draws in the withered leaf
And makes it earth, hissed," etc.

Perhaps that is Tennyson at his very best as an observer of Nature, and therefore hardly a typical example of his work. But there are numbers of phrases like the following which, if not quite so striking and uncommon, are but a little inferior:

"Growths of jasmine turned
Their humid arms festooning tree to tree
And at the root through lush green grass
The red anemone."

"But at the flash and motion of the man
They vanished panic-stricken, like a shoal
Of darting fish, that on a summer morn
Adorn the crystal dykes at Camelot
Come slipping o'er their shadows on the sand,
But if a man who stands upon the brink
But lift a shining hand against the sun
There is not left the twinkle of a fin
Betwixt the cressy islets white in flower."

That the shell of the chestnut "divides threefold to show the fruit within" is not known by most of us. But we are aware for the most part that minnows will scurry away if a shadow falls upon the water. The second is commoner than the first, and so is wrongly considered to show less clarity and keenness of perception.

Tennyson notes particular manifestations of Nature—occasional phenomena and the like—with as careful an eye as the more general

“ . . . as he that tells the tale
Saw once a great piece of a promontory,
That had a sapling growing on it, slip
From the longshore-cliff's windy walls to the beach
And these live still and yet the sapling grew.”

A sixth example is a general one from *The Poet's Song* :

“ The wild hawk stood with the down on his beak
And stared with his foot on the prey.”

A GREAT POLISH POET.

The first number of a new monthly review—*Pologne Littéraire*—published at Warsaw, devotes its front page to an article on “Un grand poète polonais—Jean Kasprowicz,” with whose work all readers of the POETRY REVIEW should be acquainted. Kasprowicz was born in 1860, the son of a peasant, and died last year. He used his pen in the name of the people, his poems asserting their rights, he being the precursor of spiritual forces sleeping in the masses.

Kasprowicz belonged to a type of creators who develop slowly but who, when once in the entire possession of their talent, display the strength of powerful individuality. He reached the maturity of his talent at the dawn of the twentieth century, with a remarkable dramatic poem of Golgotha, *Sur le mont de la mort*, and a cycle of hymns, *Au monde perissant*, which placed him in the first rank of the great poets of Poland. Much more should be said about him and his work but at the moment we cannot do more than notice his devotion to classical and particularly English, poetry. His first poem, printed in 1885, *Devant la Pyramide de Ceste*, was dedicated to the “mânes” of Shelley and his first translation in 1887 was from the same English poet, with whom Kasprowicz concerned himself up to the last ten years of his life. All his translations of the great works in poetry were done in verse, and for the most part he successfully employed measures corresponding to the original. In addition to his translations Kasprowicz published studies of English poets, notably of Shelley (1895) and Byron (1917 and 1926) and Tennyson (1894). He translated into Polish the longer poems of Tennyson and Swinburne as well as almost all of Shakespeare's plays, beginning with Hamlet in 1890 and ending with Macbeth two years ago, leaving, however, several unpublished MSS which would have completed his translations of the works of Shakespeare.

By this stupendous work Kasprowicz exercised a tremendous influence in his native country and through him English poetry

has become a spiritual and intellectual force in Poland. As his obituary notice in *Pologne Littéraire* finally concludes: "Si la foi en la force magiquement endormie de l'homme du peuple, en sa santé morale, en ses instincts profonds de vie religieuse indispensable, si tout cela n'est qu'un mythe, Kasprowicz fut, sans nul doute, un des dieux de cette mythologie, descendu sur cette terre pour s'y incarner. Celui qui reste incapable d'être entraîné par la vision hyperbolique et élémentaire de Verhaeren, celui qui n'a pas pressenti la majesté de Dieu le Père dans la musique de Bach, ne peut ni comprendre ni goûter la poésie de Kasprowicz, ni se pénétrer des sentiments qu'elle suggère."

This same issue of *Pologne Littéraire* contains a "Chef-d'oeuvre du romantisme polonais, La Non-divine comédie de Krasinski," which, curiously, is dedicated "A Monsieur Gilbert Keith Chesterton, en hommage." We understand "The Un-Divine Comedy" has been published in English, with a preface by Mr. Chesterton, by Messrs. George Harrap & Co.

* * *

THE modernist in poetry will make the not altogether pleasing discovery that he has Chaucer for an ally and example if he reads the recently published British Academy Warton Lecture (Milford, 1s.). Prof. J. M. Manly maintains that "Chaucer was endowed with the temperament, not of the rhetorician but of the artist, and in some way he arrived at the memorable discovery that the task of the artist is not to pad his tales with rhetoric but to conceive all the events and characters in the forms and activities of life." In this latest contribution to Chaucerian studies, the volume of which is only partly expressed by Prof. Spurgeon's monumental work recently noticed, Prof. Manly endeavours to show that Chaucer "began his career not merely as a disciple and imitator of a thoroughly artificial school of writing, but as a conscious exploiter of the formal rhetoric taught by the professional rhetoricians, and that it was only gradually and as the result of much thought and experiment that he replaced the conventional methods of rhetorical elaboration by those processes of imaginative construction which gives his best work so high a rank in English literature."

* * *

Mr. Thomas Wright, secretary of the Blake Society, has obtained the necessary permission to place, close to Blake's grave in Bunhill Fields, London, a simple memorial bearing the names of William Blake and his wife Catherine and the dates of birth and death.

THE SHAKESPEARE PAPERS:

THE LONDON OF SHAKESPEARE'S DAY.

BY gathering together many scattered hints in "Twelfth Night," it is possible to obtain a glimpse of London as Shakespeare knew it.

There is little mention of the City itself, but we know it was small, for Antonio says that the Elephant (or Elephant and Castle) provides good lodging, and that it is in the South *suburb*. There are few references to buildings, but the Church of St. Bennet (or Benedict), which stood opposite the Globe Theatre is spoken of. (Bells of St. Bennet, 5.1.42.) Near it was the inn kept by Dick Tarleton, Court Jester till he was turned away in 1598, and of whom Shakespeare may have been thinking when he created Feste. (cf. 1.5.18 and 3.1.5.)

The Thames was the great traffic-way of the City, and from it rose the watermen's cries of "Eastward ho!" and "Westward ho!" announcing the direction they were going. The life of the river was familiar to all, and shipping terms were commonly used in every-day speech. Viola and Sir Toby are equally well acquainted with the language of sailors.

But to turn to the higher ranks of society, there were great lords like Orsino, and ladies of noble birth like Olivia, attended by a large retinue. Olivia, be it noticed, besides her servants and gentlewomen, one of whom (Maria) is specially privileged, has a steward, a jester and a clown, and moreover she maintains her kinsman and his crony, Sir Andrew.

Sir Topas, the priest, probably does not belong to her household. He is called "Sir Priest" by Viola, in accordance with common usage, whereby the title "Sir" was given to all who had attained to a University degree. Feste, in putting on Sir Topas's robes, says he wishes he "were the first who ever dissembled in such a gown" (4.2.6), which points to the hypocrisy of a section of the priesthood. Maria says that Malvolio is "sometimes a kind of Puritan" (2.3.153), and in him Shakespeare mocks the outward show of Puritanism, whose inward fire is lacking; the "sad and civil" countenance, the ill-joy severity (which leads Sir Toby to exclaim, "Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?"), the black garments, and the occasional yellow stockings, sign of an outworn fashion which lingered only among Puritans, and still survives in our Blue Coat School.

In 2.3.63 Sir Toby suggests a catch that will draw "three souls out of one weaver." At that time weavers were mostly Calvinistic refugees from the Netherlands, whose fondness for psalm-singing

was becoming proverbial. The "three souls" was a hit at Huaité's theory in the "Trial of Wits," 1594, that man possessed a vegetative, an animal, and a rational soul.

There are cursory references to sheriffs (1.5.157) under bailiffs (3.4.197), pirates and salt water thieves (5.1.73), to ordinary fools and allowed fools, to wise women (3.4.116), to the popular belief in the cure of lunacy by a priest (4.2.25), and by putting the madman in a dark room (3.4.150); to the well-known inn sign of two wooden heads, and the inscription "We three loggerheads be" (2.3.15). And there are many allusions to customs of the time, such as the fashion of wearing metal-pointed laces to bind together doublet and hose; Olivia's seal has on it the head of Lucrece, in common with many another lady's (2.5.105). Malvolio fancies himself as the owner of a watch (2.5.67). Antonio speaks of the richly carved and ornamented trunks (3.4.406), which were valued pieces of furniture.

The ladies of the day were wont to cover their faces when speaking to stranger men (1.5.176). Their habit of painting to increase their natural beauty is alluded to in 1.5.256.

Bear baiting was a popular amusement (2.5.10). A favourite optical toy called a perspective is spoken of in 5.1.227; and well-known games, such as tray trip (2.5.209), and cherry pit (3.4.131) are mentioned. Dances, too, were many and various. There were slow dances like the *passo e mezzo* (passy measures pavin, 5.1.209), and quick steps like the galliard (1.3.129). And merry Londoners, no less than country folk, forgot their cares and revelled from morn till night on May Day (3.4.158).

Shakespeare was evidently well acquainted with contemporary literature, both popular and otherwise. Several snatches of well-known rhymes and songs are introduced, such as the round "Thou Knave" (2.3.68), and others in the same scene, and Malvolio's quotation from "The crow sits upon the wall" (3.4.26).

Euphuism is constantly held up to ridicule. "Perpend, my princess, and give ear," says Feste in 5.1.211, and Sir Toby quotes Lily's Latin grammar (2.3.3) to Sir Andrew, but that "scholar" fails to recognise the quotation.

The four elements, or humours, of which theory Ben Johnson was the great literary exponent, are touched upon by Sir Toby seven lines later, and by Maria in 1.3.78, where a dry hand denotes lack of affection.

The much-debated "Lady of the Strachy" (2.5.45) may refer to Webster's play, "The Duchess of Malfi"; in any case, the expres-

sion certainly had a meaning for Shakespeare's audience. So, too, had "Peg-a-Ramsay" and "Mistress Mall" (1.3.137), who are but vague figures to us. There was a popular tune called "Little Peg a Ramsay," and the reference may be to that.

When Feste in 3.1.59 refers to "Lord Pandarus of Phrygia," and Troilus and Cressida, Shakespeare is probably thinking of Henryson's "Testament of Cresseid." He may have had Chaucer's Tale of Sir Topas in mind when he named his priest; or perhaps he remembered that the topaz was supposed to cure insanity. Again, when Feste says he would have "men of such constancy put to sea" (2.4.77), may he not have been punning on Chaucer's Tale of Constance (told by the Man of Lawe), who was put to sea in an open boat and left to drift?

I. i. 22 and 34. The "Thoughts like hounds" and "Golden shaft" are probably suggested by Golding's translation of Ovid. "The Egyptian thief at point of death" (5.1.16) refers to the story of Theagenes and Chariclea in the *Ethiopica* of Heliodorus.

Feste speaks of the old drama of "Gorbuduc," the first English tragedy, written by Sackville and Norton in 1561. The song in 4.2.132 is important, as it mentions the Vice, who is the comic survivor of the devil of the Miracle plays, and the forerunner of our modern harlequin.

Several books of travel had come out at the end of the century, and from Gerrit de Vere's "Voyage of the Dutchman Barentz to Nova Zembla in 1596," Shakespeare probably drew his metaphor about the icicle on a Dutchman's beard (3.2.31). In 1600 the account of Sir Robert Shirley's embassy to the Shah, or Sophy of Persia (2.5.200) was published. The "new map with the augmentation of the Indies" probably refers to one published by Molineaux in 1599, and sometimes bound up with Hakluyt's "Voyages."

The Brownists, sneered at by Sir Andrew (3.2.36), were members of a new sect founded by one Robert Browne in 1581.

An interesting interpolation, added after Sir Walter Raleigh's trial in 1603, is 3.2.50: "If thou thou'st him some thrice," referring to Coke's speech, "All that he did was by thy instigation, thou viper; for I thou thee, thou traitor, I will prove thee the rankest traitor in all England."

Fabian's phrase "to give a dog, and in recompense desire my dog again," refers to an amusing incident. The Queen asked her kinsman, Dr. Bullein, for his dog, for she knew that he loved it more than anything else, and in return she promised to give him whatever he asked. "Then," he said, "I pray you give me my dogge againe."

There is such a wealth of topical allusion in "Twelfth Night" that the play must have been extremely popular (apart from its intrinsic value) with an audience that recognised every hit. We are bound to miss many of the points; but no one who has studied it even slightly can avoid feeling that Shakespeare's gift of combining such varied material from such different sources into one harmonious whole is almost miraculous. His genius shows itself in the ease with which he weaves into his play references which appeal to all classes of his audience, and which stamp him, not merely as a *learned* writer, but as a man thoroughly acquainted with the life of his day.

M. B. FOOTE.

* * *

Miss Foote's second Shakespearean article, which gained the Harrap Prize last year, has been in type for several months, but its concluding paragraph aptly sums up the discussion of "Shakespeare's Learning" which has been exercising correspondents of *The Morning Post* for the last two months. In this correspondence, Capt. W. Jaggard, the author of the stupendous *Shakespeare Bibliography*, pointed out that the mural monument at Stratford to our national hero bears contemporary testimony, comparing him with three of the greatest ancient writers and thinkers, as thus:

"In judgment a Nestor,
In intellect a Socrates,
In art a Virgil;
Earth covers him,
The nation mourns him,
Olympus guards him."

In refutation of Lord Sydenham's assertion that "Shakespeare lived and died unnoticed," Mr. Jaggard recently printed an alphabet of over sixty famous writers of his period, who referred to him, mostly in flattering terms.

* * *

The English Review does not deal as freely with poetry now as it did in the earlier stage of its existence, but each issue contains at least one distinctive poem, relegated to the back end of the *Review*, instead of occupying, as once upon a time, the place of honour. (It is left to THE POETRY REVIEW to put its poetry in the forefront.) The poem of the February *English Review* is Miss Eva Dobell's *Lines on the Flyleaf of Richard Middleton's Poems*. A poet turned farmer and essayist, Mr. Frank Kendon, writes about *Sand Land* with a poet's insight and choice words.

IN PRAISE OF BERMUDA.

(“ *And I will see, before I die, . . .*.”)

MY mouth is watering for Bermuda. I fear it has hitherto meant little more to me than the Andamans and the Pickle-jars, but the eloquence of its worshippers—a term apparently including all who have seen it—is extraordinarily contagious. The grains from the Pink Beach, which Mrs. Annie Oliphant sends me, make it all very “real”; yet, reading the poems, I have been living in Faerie under the benign ægis of Prospero.

What a heaven-sent name for an English town :

Come where the town of old Saint George’s
Sits by the blue of its crescent bay !

(*Clinton Scollard.*)

The blues and purples, turquoise and peacock, of this bay, as seen from Gibbs Hill or any of the lesser heights, are not forgotten by any ; nor are the wonderful aquarial groves :

In crystal caves, ghost draperies are blown
Like cloudy scarves around the moon’s gold crown . . .
On coral terraces, the sea-fans lean ;
Gay fish, like fireflies, light dim shrubberies. . . .

(*Edith M. Walker.*)

Sea-glens where bright-hued *Angels* glide
Through terraced coral waterways,
And red sea-grasses sway in the tide
Over purple-fringed anemones. . . .
. . . a shadowy star-lit sea
Where fiery fishes come and go
Bathed in the lambent mystery
Of Neptune’s lanthorns wavering below.

(*Hilda McDonald.*)

Sheen of blossom and beauty
In meadow and garth may be,
But never showed fairer beauty
Than these gardens of the sea.

(*Clinton Scollard.*)

The wonderful phosphorescence, mentioned by Miss McDonald,
Come the dawn across the water with its shifting peacock dyes,
Or the pageant of the planets marching up the midnight skies
(*Clinton Scollard.*)

is generally noted.

What appears to have moved everyone most, however, is the
Sunset :

Something above poetic power,
A splendour, luminous, serene,
The triumph of this golden hour,
At one with all that e'er has been.

(Robert H. Mawdsley.)

The same poet writes of the clouds "like galleons" :

Serene they moved, rich argosies,
Woven of gold and crimson light
To havens of those darkling seas
Where day commingles with the night.

I watched their trailing splendours pale,
Their gold and crimson turn to grey,
As far to South each flaming sail
Burnt out on that dim shore of day.

(Robert H. Mawdsley.)

The *flora* are not forgotten :

And the lantern flowers are burning
In a Bermuda night.

(William Griffith.)

And the urns of the hibiscus spill the scarlet of their fire . . .
Over the wall the bougainvillea vine
Droops in the languid breeze,
As purple as ethereal twilight wine
In crystal chalices.

(Clinton Scollard.)

From stately cedars peeping through
And over rock and velvet lawn
The *Morning Glory* spills its blue
In rapturous greeting to the dawn. . . .
The red poinsettia stars the groves
Beyond the oleander trees,
Where bluebirds carol to their loves
And scent of lilies floods the breeze . . .
. . . Emerald palm-heads, tossing free,
Glistening fronds on a cloudless sky.

(Hilda McDonald.)

"The isle is full of noises, sounds and sweet airs." "Sometimes," said Caliban, "a thousand twangling instruments will hum about mine ears."—A wonderful description, given to Shakespeare by Heaven knows what Trinculo or Ferdinand, of the stalactites in the crystal cavern, "icy splendours in tropic caves," Hilda McDonald calls them, which, struck with a rod, will chime, so that melodies may be played upon them, ringing over the imprisoned waters which have some unknown communication with the sea.

A crystal lake of bottle green
Lies far beneath a roof of snow,
And little golden lights that glow
Like beads of amber strung around.
Naught breaks the spell. No earthly sound
Of life is heard beside the drip
Of drops of water as they slip
From rock to rock. About one sees
Fantastic figures carved, stone trees,
And cameo-like heads. It seems
Beneath a magic wand one dreams.
The stage is set for some wild scene
Of witchery. The jewelled sheen
Of pendent crystals veils the sight,
But lights the cavern's deepest night.
Within the lake, a mermaid glides;
Behind the rocks, a goblin hides.

(Virginia Forrest.)

Have I transmitted to you some of my pleasure in these poems?
Then let us leave the

Summer isles of Eden
Dreaming on the deep.

(Robert H. Mawdsley.)

and turn to the poems in the rôle of judge.

There is a general high level of merit, but there are seven contributors of outstanding merit. The best poem is written by A. Doris L. Wilson, but from the descriptive point of view, it cannot challenge the work of Hilda McDonald. Miss McDonald's entry is a real poem, flowering in many beautiful phrases; and contains real eloquence, even though she is too fond of the verbless vocative to achieve the faultless finish of Miss Wilson's work. The simple

strength of Miss Edith M. Walker's sonnet—a writer who is gaining in power and conciseness without losing any of her heritage of riotous loveliness—is marred by a weak triple rhyme (anemones, shrubberies, melodies) in the sestet. One cannot have one's cake and eat it. If people will write sonnets, they must observe the rules. This entry, however, though it must take third place, is both a poem and descriptive. Mr. Clinton Scollard submitted seven entries: VII., which consists of adequate sapphics, does not awaken interest; III. does; IV. is better still; and with I., IV., and VI., he enters the front rank. I bracket him with Miss Edith M. Walker. Mr. Robert H. Mawdsley's best poem is rather too limited in range to take a higher place than the fifth, but he is a welcome addition to our fellowship. He should omit verses three and seven. Finally, I have to bracket Miss Winifred M. Cousins, whose poem is not necessarily about Bermuda, though it comes from a neighbouring island, and Miss Virginia Forrest, who limits her best entry to the Magic Cave.

£5 is awarded to Hilda E. M. McDonald, Antigua, British West Indies, and to A. Doris L. Wilson, Renhold, Bedford.

£3 is awarded to Edith M. Walker, Bournemouth, and to Clinton Scollard, Kent, Connecticut, U.S.A.

£2 is awarded to Robert H. Mawdsley, Whalley Range, Manchester.

£1 is awarded to Winifred M. Cousins, Kingston, Jamaica, and to Virginia Forrest, Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.

Mrs. Oliphant tells me there are no motors in Bermuda. That settles it.

In addition to the above, we place the following on the "Highly Commended" list:—Doris D. Acland, Harry Elmore Hurd, Doris B. Nock, K. O'Neill-Bailey, Percy Friend Naylor, Adèle de Leeuw, Marguerite Pollard, Hannah Bolz Espie, Morwyth Rees, Bertha Skeat, T. E. Casson, Arthur Shearley Cripps, "Sailor Lot."

We commend the work of the following entrants:—Annie Oliphant, William Griffith, D. Ewens, Florence M. Bradford, John R. Moreland, Mabel Posegate, T. E. Williams, Cyprian Bridge, Ethel M. Hewitt, Walter K. Lewis, Chas. J. Arnell, H. Knight-Eaton.

O. C. DE C. E.

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Dr. Georg Brandes, the eminent critic, who died on February 19th, published a synopsis of his views on "Hamlet the Dane," in *THE POETRY REVIEW*, March 1914.

THE POETS' FELLOWSHIP.

THE Bermuda competition has, quite fairly, taken much of our time and space; and in this issue we must content ourselves with the Premium Award and a few criticisms.

The Poets' Fellowship regular premium is divided equally between Mme. Helena Derezinska, Saint-Raphael, Var, France, and Mr. Verne Bright, Oregon, U.S.A.

Others reaching the short list from which the final award was made are: Alfred H. Mendes, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, B.W.I.; Joyce Sambrook, Kensington, W.8; "Peter Raymond," London, S.W.1; Helen B. G. Sutherland, West Newport, Fife; and naturally the two following: Edith M. Walker, Bournemouth; Nancy Pollok, Glasgow, S.2. These are awarded the six book prizes.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:—Noël Allport, Elsa Brabant Parker, S. Marguerite Goode, E. Joyce Harrison, Alan W. D. Parkes, Frederick Kemp, A. E. Mackay, G. Fauvel, Ronald W. Povey, Daniel McGhie Cory, J. Passy, Hon. Eleanour Norton, Vera Arlett, M. K. Mackillop Brown, Walter K. Lewis, Florence Overton, Winifred Barrows, Arthur B. Lett, Marjorie Dawson, Doris E. Rymer.

COMMENDED: Enid I. Carter, "Margaret Ormiston," Helen M. Becht, Emir F. Ammerman, A. Marjorie Adams, Eileen Newton, John Cook, G. E. Merrick, J. W. Aizlewood, Arthur Russell, Dorothy Ewens, J. Lonsdale Bryans, Joe Corrie, Bertha M. Skeat, Julia Boynton Green, Lilian Bird, "N. M-S.," "Editha Melbourne," M. Forbes Myers, Grace Dorothy Reeves, "Elizabeth Scott," Dorothy Avarne, J. W. Hardwick.

Mme. Derezinska is a valued contributor of long standing, though we do not recall that she has previously headed the list. She usually writes us from the Polish Consulate at Strassburg. Lovers of "Personalia" may also like to know that Mr. Verne Bright is "a member of what is known in America as the Portland Group of poets. For two years I have been first vice-president of the Northwest Poetry Society, a branch of the Poetry Society with headquarters at Portland, Oregon."

Quite a number of people have recently written enclosing poems and asking for criticism, but, so far from offering the usual fee, omitting even the stamped addressed envelope. This shows a lack of humour, and no one suffering from this disease will ever be a poet. Two of them ask for an immediate reply!

Selected Criticisms and Correspondence.

[If strict privacy of criticism is desired, this must be stated in the application.]

Dorothy Bendon, San José, Cal., U.S.A.

"A Seed" will be a fine poem. The faults are these: *Crucify* in line 3 is infelicitous. In line 4 you have two substantives in apposition, one in no way referring to the other. (See *Poetry and Science*, p. 58.) The daring flouting of the sonnet rhythm in line 5 is successful, but not that in line 11.

In the last line you have *would* for *should*. Please note that the amount of your fee is incorrect.

"B.B., Manchester": "Bolton, Lancashire, New Year's Eve" is great. The faults are small ones. The transition at line 3 is too abrupt. If you make the first two lines into the 3rd and 4th, and put them in a bracket, this difficulty will be overcome. In line 9 you state an allegory. Don't! Just assume it. The line will gain by the omission of "'t is" but line 10 will want another monosyllable to replace "That." In v. 2, line 9, there is an inversion which might just as well be combed out. You are good enough a poet to scorn the plea of *licence*.

"To the Fire": You have another inversion in line 7. Why? It is like soiling a beautiful complexion with blush-powder. "Holds" and "souls" come too close together in line 3. "Lie" in the last line must refer to ashes in line 13, an irritating trick of separating the antecedent and relative only up to now indulged in by Rider Haggard. I do not believe you mean this, but in the alternative you must put *liest* or else alter all your *thees* to *yous*. You wrote this as an exercise, being not deeply moved. It is a good exercise.

Madhu Mohana, Mysore, S. India:

You will evidently become as much a master of the great language as many others of your distinguished countrymen, but as yet it is still a little unfamiliar to you, isn't it? Do not omit the article. "From *the* roof," not "from roof"; "to *my* knees," not "to knees." It is a doggerel-trick you *must* avoid. Similarly, "in (the) sea, in (the) sky." Some of your phrases, "When the wind coughed," "On soundless toe," are excellent.

Marjorie Dawson, Codnor, Derbyshire:

All three poems are delightful, but I like *Winter Jasmine* best of all. Did you consciously weave f, n and t into the beautiful pattern of lines 3, 4 and 5, I wonder? The recurrence of "faint and frail," harking back to a previous thought when the over-sophisticated reader is expecting a rhyme with "stem," is a stroke of genius.

"Violets." There are only 10 short lines here apart from "repeats." They are a beautiful miniature which I can only praise.

THE PREMIUM EDITOR'S REPORT 137

"Praise." Line 4 is just a little too sibilant. The rest is music, the thought content, however, being adequate and fine.

The rest of the criticisms have been sent by post. Many interesting letters, including a good-tempered rebuke from Harry Elmore Hurd, and a number of book notices, are held over till next time.

O. C. DE C. E.

PORTRAITURE IN POETRY.

We have pleasure in printing the following letter from Mr. Walter K. Lewis, whose generous offer and interesting definition of this novel subject for a new verse competition we cordially accept: "I would like to offer another 3 guineas as premium—this time for a portrait competition, that is, for the best poem descriptive of a human being, old or young, alive or dead, real or imaginary. By a portrait I do not mean merely a description of physical charms or peculiarities, though of course such a description would be a portrait. But I should like the competition to embrace any form of human portraiture, physical, mental, or moral. Nor do I wish it to be confined to descriptions of mere beauty. I should like the grotesque and unusual to have an equal chance of success." MSS. will be received up to May 21st, and should be addressed "Portrait," THE POETRY REVIEW, 16, Featherstone Buildings, W.C.1.

* * *

The admirable "Touchstone" who adorns the middle page of *The Morning Post* with a daily comment in verse, concluded some observations on the February fogs with

"And as I gaze out into the nothingness
It comes into my mind
That this is very like
Some of the Neo-Georgian poetry
That I have read lately—
Just fog."

* * *

Mr. Hugh B. Cott, who has been a contributor to THE POETRY REVIEW and POETRY OF TO-DAY, sending MSS. from the upper reaches of the Amazon and other remote places, is now on the Zambesi on a special mission. Opportunity having been afforded to the Zoological Society to send a collector to the extensive Sena Sugar Estates in the Zambesi Valley, Portuguese East Africa, Mr. Cott, who is attached to the Zoological Department of Cambridge University,

was selected for the work. The territory covers an extensive area of very diversified character, but is for the most part low-lying and swampy. It is not expected that many mammals will be taken, but the country is very rich in birds, especially waterfowl, birds of prey, and small birds. The reptilian and amphibian fauna is also very rich, and it is hoped that a large collection of snakes, lizards, and frogs will be obtained for the new Reptile House.

* * *

THE English Association, which does poetry the honour of treating poets and poetry as constituting almost nine-tenths of "English," was happy in having as President last year Mr. John Bailey, who, in the Association's latest pamphlet (Milford, 2s. 6d.), debates "A Question of Taste" with rare acumen and persuasion. He argues that there is as much (or more) "stability in æsthetic judgments as in ethical or political or philosophic or scientific; that the reputations of poets and artists are not less but more assured than those of biologists or statesmen or metaphysicians." He dismisses the common belief (which has been asserted lately in defence of challenged reputations) that poets have in all times found their contemporaries hostile or indifferent as being a "complete delusion," and points out that "we have for practical purposes an infallible hallmark distinguishing fine work, in the arts from work which is mediocre, poor, or actually bad. The test is repetition." By the application of this simple test "all people of ordinary æsthetic capacity, even the most modest, can prove to themselves the reality of æsthetic judgments." Mr. Bailey concludes by expressing the belief that "when we are immersed in the greatest experiences of poetry or art, we are conscious of being on ground as sure as any which it is given to our weak human nature to walk on. . . . We cannot but claim that art and poetry, however few may be their faithful, have the right and duty of refusing any admission of anarchy into their ranks; the right of claiming for the articles of their faith, as the Church has always claimed for hers, that, if fitly and truly presented, they will be believed *semper et ubique et ab omnibus*, everywhere and at all times and by all men." We wish the faithful few would show more charity, reasonableness, unity in seeking to impose those articles on less cultured but not less sincere seekers after a right judgment.

* * *

For particulars of the regular Premium offer see the last issue of THE POETRY REVIEW.

A POET'S VISION.

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

SIR,—Mr. Rawnsley's brief tribute to the work and continuity of the Poetry Society and its journal impels me to say that the Poetry Society has my strong support. I find an interest in poetry not so common that any encouragement of it may be neglected. If I may make a criticism, I would venture to say that the *dicta* of Matthew Arnold should be laid more to heart—that excellence is not common; that it dwells among the crags almost inaccessible to man. I would venture to require the “high and severe excellence” on which Arnold insists.

I should like to see poetry taught in all schools, not only in England, but throughout the world. I know from experience in teaching that many children under twenty find expression in verse as easy as in prose, and that musical versification—especially blank verse—is natural to them.

I suggest that the Poetry Society should aim so high that it should become one executive branch of the organisation of the League of Nations. Were universal Peace established, poetry and the drama could become the practice and heritage of all men, as they are now consciously of a small percentage. A production of the *Prometheus Vincit* of Æschylus is to be given at Delphi this spring. I suggest that, as Delphi is the navel of the earth, it should be made the centre of the poetic work of the world, and plays produced by the various nations in competition, as plays were produced in competition by Æschylus and Sophocles. In this way, a universal literary language might be produced—by preference (*me saltem judice*) Latin or Greek. The peoples of the earth will need some occupation when they cease from warfare. Let some portion of this activity—greater than at present—be expended on Poetry.

I look forward to a time when Poets shall be not only “The unacknowledged legislators of the world,” but as in some sort acknowledged. The Welsh Bards, the Provençal Courts of Love, should all be enlisted in the cause of Peace and Humanity, till some society such as that sketched in the *Revolt of Islam* should be consummated. Humanity may live to be controlled by the spirit of the poet of my adoration, Shelley.

I beg to subscribe myself, yours very faithfully,

T. E. CASSON.

Miss Dora Hodgskin draws attention to a fine instance of prophecy in poetry by the late Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW. In *Midnight—31st of December*, 1900, Stephen Phillips, writing at a time when the

horse-bus and hackney-cab had not yet been banished from our streets, foretells a future of "smooth electrical ease":—

"Ye shall ride on a Power of the air, on a Force that is bridled,
On a saddled Element leap ;

"In that day shall a man out of uttermost India whisper,
And in England his friend shall hear ;
And a maid in an English meadow have sight of her lover
Who wanders in far Cathay."

Electric car—aeroplane—wireless—television ; each is a part of the gradual fulfilment of the poet's dream.

• • •

Another correspondent (London) considers that the increased attention given to the hygienic value of sunshine, especially to the ultra-violet rays, combined with the physical advantages of women's modern dress, will bring about the realisation of Walt Whitman's vision :

Now if a thousand perfect men were to appear it would not
amaze me,

Now if a thousand beautiful women appear'd it would not astonish
me.

Now I see the secret of the making of the best persons,
It is to grow in the open air and to eat and sleep with the earth.

• • •

BROWNING AS A DRAMATIST.

Mr. William Lyon Phelps, the genial and erudite conductor of *Scribner's* causerie, *As I Like It*, comes to the same conclusion as did Mr. H. W. Walbrook, the *Pall Mall Gazette* and *Observer* critic, when he saw Ion Swinley and Mary Merrell in Browning's *In a Balcony* at the Poetry Society's commemoration of the Browning Centenary. Mr. Phelps has been similarly convinced that "Browning is the most dramatic poet, except Shakespeare, in English literature, though he was not so good a playwright as Shaw or Barrie or Galsworthy or Ervine. His plays, however, are better than those who have not seen them pronounce them to be. The Neighbourhood Playhouse made a success with *Pippa Passes* ; Otis Skinner, Eleanor Robson and Mrs. Lemoyne made a deep and lasting impression with *In a Balcony* ; Mrs. Lemoyne and Grace Elliston aroused immense enthusiasm with *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon*. But it is possible that in the future Browning will hold the stage mainly by dramatised versions of his poems. Walter Hampden, to

whom the modern drama owes so much, has produced in his own theatre at New York *Caponsacchi*, made from *The Ring and the Book*, by Arthur Goodrich and Rose A. Palmer. It is a tragedy, and in verse, Browning's own lines being kept wherever possible. Instead of being a meritorious bore, it is thrilling." We hope this hint will be taken in London. Miss Joan Brockington anticipates it in her new novel. We have suggested the dramatised presentation of Browning's *Men and Women* to revue producers, but have not been listened to.

Mr. PHELPS, in this monthly feature, has the most admirable "King Charles's head." He loses no opportunity of referring to Browning, and to his enthusiasm Fano, "which used to be one hundred per cent. Italian," has now a Fano Club and is over-run with Americans, who examine the guardian angel of Guercino and read the poem aloud before it. Before going on to Fano last summer some of these American Browningites did what we have never heard of anyone doing before—they "made a solemn pilgrimage to the little church at Pentridge, Dorset, to see the tablet to the footman ancestor (d. 1741) of Robert Browning, inscribed 'All service ranks the same with God.'"

By the way, Mr. Phelps in his February causerie refers to "two books of high value for those who follow contemporary drama and verse; they are Burns Mantle's *The Best Plays of 1925-26*, and William Stanley Braithwaite's *Anthology of Magazine Verse*, 1926. Mr. Braithwaite has performed many valuable services in the cause of poetry; the amount of labour bestowed on this latest tome is almost terrifying. Yet it is all so carefully and thoroughly indexed that the reader can find immediately anything he wants—except, alas! great poetry. But that is not the fault of the compiler, and it is well to know the truth." We arrive at the same conclusion after examining similar contemporary verse collections.

A New York correspondent assures us that a Cambridge English professor recently prefaced a lecture to the undergraduates on Browning's *Pacchiarotto and How he Worked in Distemper*, with the comment, "This, gentlemen, is not the story of a brave dog, as most of you imagine, and how he carried on during serious illness."

The interest taken by a crowded Kensington Centre meeting in Dr. Kirtlan's racy description of *Beowulf*, illustrated from his own

and the Cambridge University Press versions of this Northumbrian saga, indicates that there will be a large and appreciative public for the *Anglo-Saxon Poetry* volume included in the new twenty volumes of *Everyman's Library*. That Professor R. K. Gordon's versions of our pre-Conquest poetry are in prose will be a welcome relief to the general reader, who can get a thorough acquaintance with our earliest literature unencumbered by archaic forms, and it is the highest praise we can give to Professor Gordon's work to say that his paraphrases read like pages from Malory and constitute a fascinating collection which includes not only the Anglo-Saxon epics and lyrics from the *Exeter Book*, the *Bodley MSS.*, and the *Vercelli Book*, but also the curious old English riddles and gnomic poetry in the *Exeter Book*.

* * *

We hope now that Kingsley's dramatic *Saint's Tragedy* (together with his long poem, *Andromeda*, which Swinburne once said contained the finest hexameters written in English), is available in *The Poems of Charles Kingsley*, recently added to *Everyman's Library*, the Poetry Society Centres and Reading Circles will add part readings of this most readable poetic drama to their programmes. We hope, too, that this volume will be followed by a collection of Kingsley's sympathetic studies of poets and poetry, which would be a useful corrective to many views and theories of the present day, for Kingsley attempted to say why it is that modern, too subjective poets can no longer recover the simple strains of the earlier lyric poetry and ballad, insisting that the only true poetry that lives in the hearts of men everywhere, apart from the literary coteries, is simple in form and language.

* * *

The recent Poe revival will make the collection of his poems an exceptionally welcome addition to *Everyman's Library* (which has become every man's university), especially as it includes an introduction by Andrew Lang, who wisely recognised that however much Poe's poems may fit the odd definition of the highest poetry as "sense swooning into nonsense," he has nothing to give but music, and people who want more must go to others that sell a different ware. "He is the singer of our hours of languor, when the soul is vacant to the pride of life and inclined to listen, as it were, to the echo of a lyre from behind the hills of death." But however we may regret the comparatively small volume of his poetry, this *Everyman's Poe* has an added value inasmuch as it includes his really important provocative essays on the poetic principle, the rationale of verse and other pertinent matters.

THE SHAKESPEARE MEMORIAL THEATRE FUND.

Members and readers are urged to co-operate in the Poetry Society's carefully considered scheme for assisting the funds of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon. The only national memorial to the world's greatest poet and dramatist was destroyed by fire a year ago and still lies

"A naked subject to the weeping winds
And waste for churlish winter's tyranny."

A magnificent site has been secured for the new theatre, which will stand in the now enlarged Bancroft Gardens, with the Avon on one side, and within sight of Shakespeare's church and burial-place, and the great main roads leading from London, Warwick, Oxford and Kenilworth. Plans are in hand to secure a design for a £100,000 building worthy of the site. The Royal Institute of British Architects has been entrusted with the competition scheme, but in addition to the building there is need for adequate endowment of it, and the whole world has been appealed to. We should most heartily support the Poetry Society's significant effort, and members and others are urged to place themselves into communication with the S.R. Organiser at the offices of the Poetry Society, 16, Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.1.

Recitals, which have proved how effectively this scheme can be carried out and how interesting the competitions are, have been held in various parts of the country, and the following, among others, have been arranged for March :—

Halifax, Barrow-in-Furness, Hendon, Rye, Stamford Hill,
Chiswick, Sherbourne, Dorchester, Watford, Ringwood.

The receipts to the end of 1926 enabled the Treasurer to send a preliminary cheque for £150 to the Trustees at Stratford-on-Avon. This amount should be multiplied eventually a hundredfold, and now that the adverse conditions that militated against this national movement during last year are passing away we trust the S.R. Fund will be developed vigorously and effectively throughout the country, and that the appeal made to members for individual donations as "B" members of the Poetry Society's Shakespeare Guild will now receive greater attention.

The collateral Verse Competition brought in poems from all parts of the world, and we hope that the result may be made known at an early date. Characteristic of these diverse entries is a series of poems, in Arabic, from Mikhail ibn Anton asSaqqal of Aleppo (Michael, Son of Anthony the Polisher). These contributions, Sir E. Denison Ross, Director of the School of Oriental Studies and an authority on Eastern poetry, to whom they were submitted,

assures us, "are the work of a man possessing the deep knowledge of his own language, with a marked aptitude for the subtleties of Arabic poetry. I have derived very great pleasure from reading them, and think they are really very fine indeed."

* * *

SHAKESPEARE IN ICELAND.—Mr. Einarsson, in the course of a letter from Reykyavik, Iceland, informs us: "I have translated into Icelandic *King Henry IV*, both parts, and six of Shakespeare's comedies. Two of them have been performed at Reykyavik—the first, *Twelfth Night*, 1926, and now *The Winter's Tale*. If I should live some years I will try to translate *Julius Cæsar* and *Richard III*. Whether I am to translate *Henry V* and *Henry VI*, three parts, I don't know. We have five of Shakespeare's great tragedies translated before, so we have already good specimens in Iceland of the Shakesperean genius. No one of my translations has been printed as yet. I am so far only working for the theatre."

* * *

VERSE SPEAKING EXAMINATIONS PASS LISTS.

Lawnside, Gt. Malvern, December 7th, 1926.

CERTIFICATE CLASS—Juniors (Special Distinction): Betty Douglas, Joan Fergusson, Katherine Paterson. (Honours): Helena Budgen, Betty Challands, Isabel Downe, Helen Lister, Barbara Watson, Margaret Chesteston. (Commended): Copper Hobson, Judith Beevor. (Pass): Joan Cuffe.

Seniors (Honours): Margaret Castle. (Commended): Nancy Jones. (Pass): Caroline Renschlin.

BRONZE MEDALS CLASS—Juniors (Special Distinction): Joan Ker. (Honours): Olga Barrows, Margaret Booker, Jose Line, Vesper Hunter, Euthine Tilley, Mary Toppin, Shirley Upton, Mary Walling. (Commended): Sheila Beevor, Peggy Townley.

Seniors (Special Distinction): Pamela Faber. (Honours): Jean Evans, Kitty Hall, Joan Tweddell, Mary Sitwell. (Commended): Dorothy Brett, Jean Clingan, Helen Braid, Margaret Giles, Yvonne Orme, Christina Petrie, Mary Walker, Deva Zalandik. (Pass): Geraldine Wright.

* * *

The Spring Examination in Verse Speaking will be held at the University of London on March 26th. Entries should be addressed to the Registrar, The Poetry Society, 16 Featherstone Buildings, W.C.1, a week prior to that date. A Gold Medal Examination (in the form of a public Poetry Recital) will be held in May.

DEATH OF MR. W. F. RAWNSLEY

In the last issue of *THE POETRY REVIEW* we published a kindly letter of appreciation written from inside knowledge by the G.O.M. of the Poetry Society, Mr. Rawnsley. In this issue we have to record his death, which took place at his Surrey home, The Manor House, Shamley Green, Guildford, on February 19th, the funeral taking place on February 22nd at Halton Holgate, Lincolnshire, where his father, the Rev. Drummond Rawnsley, was rector for many years. It is a melancholy satisfaction to us now that in a footnote in our last issue we paid a brief tribute to the services and influence of the most faithful friend of the Poetry Society, and at the moment of going to press we are not able to enlarge considerably thereon.

Mr. Willingham Franklin Rawnsley, the grand-nephew of Sir John Franklin of North-West Passage fame (the life and letters of whose intrepid wife, Jane, Lady Franklin, Mr. Rawnsley edited a few years ago), became the first life member of the Poetry Society on March 2nd, 1910, and shortly thereafter was elected to the General Council, and remained till the close of his life, at the age of 82, a source of strength to the Poetry Society, impervious to prejudice, unperturbed by difficulties, unaffected by reservations and Laodicean feebleness, and in all respects a gentleman.

He became President of the Society at an awkward stage of its development, and was President at the Incorporation period, retiring from this office two years ago, his last official appearance being at Aldworth (where his lifelong friend Tennyson died), on the occasion of the Society's visit there as guests of the Maharajah Gaekwar of Baroda in July, 1925, drawing once more on his wonderful store of reminiscences of the Victorian Laureate, whose conception of the ideals of the Round Table he embodied, particularly as one "who spoke no slander, no, nor listened to it."

He subsequently, in spite of physical infirmity, continued to encourage us in many practical and active ways, and during last year visited several schools, including Felixstowe, Clifton and Lawnside Great Malvern, where he presented replicas of the Tennyson bust provided by him-

self in recognition of fine quality in verse-writing by school groups. His passing is a serious, lamentable breach in the great fellowship he helped so worthily to constitute and maintain, and we shall miss him from *THE POETRY REVIEW*, in which, as all readers know, he had a paternal interest.

THEY CRUCIFIED HIM . . . IN THE SPRING

HIS love was such, I think His heart had burst
 Before those three dread hours of agony,
 The driven nails, and slow, unquenched thirst,
 Had they not led Him out to Calvary.
 They murdered John within a prison space,
 And Joan was burned in Rouen's market place,
 But in His sight, whose pain exceeded these,
 Were terraced vineyards and grey olive trees.

His love was such, the olive and the vine
 To Him, and all the flowers of Cana's Spring,
 Were dearer even than English woods of mine
 To me. And yet I wonder if Death's sting
 Had been more cruel if His feet had stood
 (The feet they maimed) one April in this wood,
 If those tormented hands had ever held
 A bunch of primroses that He had smelled.

EVELYN D. BANGAY.

* * *

Mr. Rawnsley would have been delighted with the news that reaches us as we go to press from the National Trust (with which he was associated) to the effect that Lord Tennyson has given to the nation Tennyson Down, Freshwater, a part of the Farringford estate so intimately associated with the poet. The announcement in the daily papers before this issue is published will have gratified all Tennysonians, who will regret to learn that Aldworth, of happy memories, is to be offered for sale by auction in May. A movement, with which readers are asked to associate themselves, has been set on foot for the purpose of acquiring this beautiful Tennyson shrine.

THE POET AND THE POETIC PRINCIPLE

A meeting of the Poets' Fellowship (Northern Group) was held at the Midland Hotel, Manchester, on February 12th. Dr. Oliver C. de C. Ellis presided. Mr. L. Conrad Hartley, who read a paper on "The Poet and the Poetic Principle," said he was going back to a subject he had studied twenty years ago, and he had not had occasion to revise his earlier ideas and thoughts. Religion, poetry and nature could not be defined—that way lay madness. Obviously, you would say, the poet made the poem, but he did nothing of the sort. The reader made it by the feeling it aroused in him. The poet had an intense craving for the beautiful. He had confidence in himself, and in his power—and rightly. The enthusiasm of the poet frightened us at times. He was not a creature of reason. Edgar Allan Poe had said the poetic principle was the human aspiration for extreme beauty. The poetic principle was quite apart from passion and reason. Mr. Hartley discussed four important parts of a poem—rhythm, subject, substance and form. All were related to the poem, but they must be looked at separately. He spoke of the sheer joy of the lilt of words. The substance of a poem was evidenced by its trend. By "form" he did not mean the number of feet in a line, but the actual words in their actual power. Mr. Hartley praised the simplicity and concreteness of the well-known nursery rhyme, "Mary had a little lamb." At least one of his hearers would have smiled at this, but such was the speaker's wizardry that doubt passed through interest to conviction. It may well be, as Mr. Hartley suggested, that a child's appreciation of this simplicity and directness foreshadows, and even is necessary to, later understanding of all that is finest in poetry. In conclusion, the speaker said to read poetry aright one must have some of the poet's imagination. Poetry was suggestive of the things that held together the earth and the heavens. The poet writing for his peers alone was writing for humanity. A great poet was understood so easily by the universality of his picture, and through the employment of the simplest things as symbols. Though serving all, the poet was yet our master.

The Chairman described some passages in Mr. Hartley's paper as "pure poetry," and some as "difficult philosophy." He particularly liked a reference made by the speaker to rain as the poetry of earth. He was impressed by the spirit of adventure in the paper. Adventure stirred up everything. He was in sympathy with Mr. Hartley about "Mary had a little lamb." He did not quite follow the remarks about empiricism—a poet must not generalise; but he had been pleased to hear about "protean poet," because if a poet had

no sense of humour he was lost. He agreed that poetry was the great cohesive principle of the universe.

Miss Knowles and Mrs. Tweedale both spoke of the great pleasure Mr. Hartley's paper had given them, and there is no doubt that was "the feeling of the meeting." At this point in the discussion one or two visitors from another city had to leave—the totally inadequate amateur reporter with them.

* * *

Mr. W. Adams, of Belfast, in the course of a lecture on "Progress and—Poetry," quoted some statistics of publications of poetry, in the compilation of which he received very courteous assistance from *The Publishers' Circular*. (Note that they include Poetry and the Drama, no separate figures being published.)

Year.		New Books.	New Editions.	Total.
1912	..	442	279	721
1913	..	446	231	677
1919	..	418	77	495
1920	..	483	80	563
1921	..	591	126	617
1922	..	572	130	702
1923	..	544	202	746
1924	..	619	191	810
1925	..	636	158	794
1926	..	640	154	794

Mr. Adams suggests "the exchange of papers between Centres (authors permitting, of course)? I do not mean so much for mere reading, ready made, but for the purpose of using the results of research—facts, quotations, etc., regarding a man or a subject, thus lessening the labour of compiling papers and widening the usefulness of Centre lectures, etc."

* * *

THE Poets' Fellowship is not a separate and independent organisation. It is a group within the Poetry Society, embracing the producing members, and constitutes an informal POETRY REVIEW and POETRY OF TO-DAY Contributors' Club. Occasional special meetings for this class of members are arranged, grouped round the New Verse Editor, who is responsible for their special section of THE POETRY REVIEW—an extension of the functions and influence of the Premium Editor. Members entitled to inclusion within this inner circle are asked to advise us when they publish a new book or do any notable work in connection with poetry so that they may receive their meed of recognition.

THE WOOD

A T star-befriended lyric eve
I lonely watched the woodland weave
Its phantom figurines over my head.
Deep had the autumn sunset bled
Between the boles planted side by side ;
The speech of the fiery leaves had died,
The vaguest of murmurs mourned with a moan,
Mounting the mountains of mist that were blown
Obscurely out of their majesty—
Obscurely out of each haunted tree—
Into the pang of the tumult in me.

It was the night of my dead sorrow,
I had no heart for the unborn morrow—
My heart was fettered with a stone,
Drowned in memories, and alone.
It was the night of the lost Dead—
O ! how I turned it in my head
That faces vanished never have been
With this same verdure again seen :
Loved hands and the features, words and the brain,
Made once and for ever, never again !

Now, as I mourned the lonely notion
(Lost pilgrim dreaming without motion
On this the night of his dead sorrow,
Without heart for unborn morrow),
Sweet Stillness, out of the mournful mist,
Her frosted touch of amethyst
Slipped over to me and lay about
My unforgetful head, and out
Of evening's nacre through her hands,
As music from the shelled sands,
Breathed in my turned and attentive ear :
“ No sigh, or cry, distresses, nor tear ! ”
And shook her hair to shadow me,
“ No misery betwixt me and thee ! ”
With coiling fingers wound through my hair,
Shiveringly blue, till ancient Care

Walked out of my breast with broken tread,
Cold with the cold leaves, dropping dead.

There ran by a drone of solemn wind
Round the drowned stars I could not find,
Riding in sombre majesty.
It chilled me to the very hair, so I,
Not playing foul to Stillness fair,
Cast backward glances into the lair
Of awful, bending tree-forms, blue
With the sweeping of incense, light-poured through
From the cold, listening, templed wood.
Stillness trembled, and wakening, stood ;
While in the creeping mist disturbed
I soft demanded she be curbed :
“ Fear not,” I said to her, “ Stillness and I,
Even if all the world should die,
Alone shall live ! ”

The loud wind kept playing
A lordly thunder as it went swaying
Over the roaring elms going bare.
We saw, through their entangled hair,
The wealth of cloud go piling down,
One mountain after another crown,
Rolling, involving, merging and mumbling,
Gigantic masses of power rumbling ;
Their scintillations caught at heel
As sparks let out of the grinding wheel
In flying seeds of fire alight
Struck out in world-dust through the night.
The vacuous, imperial skies,
We saw at last with the clearest eyes,
Driven league on league, bewildering—
High troops of stars—a martial swing.
Till down the fluid army gushed
Full on our shoulders in the hushed—
The wood, miraculously blest.

Superbly, and at God-like rest,
On this the night of our dead sorrow,

A POOR MAN'S REBELLION

151

We without heart for unmade morrow,
Bosoms fettered with a stone—
We saw them, holy and unalone,
Under the stern, prophetic skies,
Standing, the Dead, with their deep, fixed eyes,
They of all people, and they only,
Never forsaken—never lonely,
Mile on mile, till eternity,
Waiting and watching, even as we.

HELENA DEREZINSKA.

A POOR MAN'S REBELLION

I GO to church and let my coin
Drop in the passing plate,
For Parson says that pennies join
Man to a godly state.

But when I home returning find
My wife by candle-light
Working her fingers and half-blind
Eyes o'er a cloth of white ;

And when I see our little house
With only a broken bed
And not food enough in it for a mouse
To search out with nimble tread ;

And when I recall that church so fine
With hanging lamps untold
And marble stairways that incline
To altars of pure gold :

Then I say : " Dear, God's mercy dwells
More at this humble door
Than in that edifice where spells
Are wrought to rob the poor."

ALFRED H. MENDES.

SPORT

WE live in the age of enlightenment .
Yet we hunted a stag—large-eyed and open,
With terror shod hoofs, and proud head bent
(How sweet to him was the heather !)
Down to the peaceful shore, where he
Toiled on through the waves for liberty.
But we captured him there in the sunbright sea
And brought him to die on the heather.

NOEL ALLPORT.

AYR

To A. B. G.

THERE is a western town, bordering the sea,
Crowded with golden memories and cherished ghosts
And childhood's joys. A dream-filled town to me,
Gay with the ceaseless music of the wave-fringed coasts.

There is a Spirit there, above the rest
Who, star-like, lights the western city and whose name
Is rock-bound in a crag, by waves caressed,
O Ailsa Craig, dark in the sunset's crimson flame !

Yet some may only see a common town,
And pass along its pavements with unheeding feet,
Nor breathe the subtle fragrance floating down,
Nor share with me the glory of each haunted street.

And some may see its sands as other sands,
Nor note their yellow magic, feel the insistent spell
Which draws me to them by their gleaming strands
Of sea-weed, and the wonder of each fairy shell.

There is enchantment in the summer light
That smiles across the rugged hills of Arran there—
And, oh ! to me there is no fairer sight
Than wavelets, blue and golden, round the Heads of Ayr !

HELEN B. G. SUTHERLAND.

MODERN GREEK POETRY.—I

GREEK FOLK POETRY.

THE source from which the best of modern Greek poets have been inspired is our folk poetry. From the poetical point of view the folk songs are very original indeed. Their natural language also has very much influenced some of our poetical schools. A preliminary notice of them is therefore indispensable.

I.

During the Greek war of independence, in the middle of the critical year 1824, a book was published in Paris, with the title *Chants populaires de la Grèce moderne* with a French translation, explanation and notes by Claude Fauriel. This book had a tremendous success. For the first time it became known that modern Greece possesses a poetical treasure of her own.

In the following year, 1825, Wilhelm Müller, the well-known German poet—the father of Max Müller—published, in Leipzig, a German translation of the *Neugriechische Volkslieder* with Fauriel's notes, declaring himself that "the publication of Fauriel's collection immensely widened the poetical horizon of the world." Still earlier Goethe himself not only eulogised the Greek songs, but also translated six *Heldenlieder* and three *Liebeskolien* in verse.

In the same year, 1825, were published in London *The Songs of Greece* from the romaic text, edited by M. C. Fauriel, with additions and translated into English verse by Charles Brinsley Sheridan. The following simple note is very moving: "The profits of this volume are given to the Society for the Promotion of Education in Greece." Since then many English collections and translations have appeared, but one more would not be superfluous. Within the same year, 1825, a Russian translation of some Greek popular songs by N. Gneditz appeared in St. Petersburg, based on the work of the great French scholar.

Fauriel's introduction was excellent. Especially valuable is his picture of the blind versifiers who, as he says, "repre-

sent the ancient rhapsodists with a striking exactitude. They traverse Greece from the far end of the Peloponnesus to Constantinople, from the shores of the Ægean Sea to those of Ionia. It is the country fairs, known as πανηγύρια, that they are most diligent in frequenting. They sing to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument, which they touch with a bow, and which represents the ancient lyre of the Greeks."

But the most curious similarity with the ancient rhapsodists is something which has not yet been noticed—that when they meet each other in the fairs, a poetical competition takes place between them, like that famous contest between Homer and Hesiod, in which the last was the victor, or like the other, in which Plato's Io won the first prize, or better still, like the simple competitions between Theocritus' shepherds. The names of those rhapsodists are, of course, unknown with very few exceptions, but all our folk poetry is their work.

Let us, now, see first the historical songs, viz., those connected with some known or unknown facts of Greek history. The chronological order is the more convenient to follow.

The most ancient of the Greek folk songs have their origin in Asia Minor and date back to the heyday of the mediæval Greek Empire, when its frontiers were on the mountains of Taurus and the bank of the Euphrates.

The guardians of those ἄκρα, who continually fought against the first Mahomedans, the Saracens, were called ἀκρίται and ἀπελάται and the songs relating to them are the ἀκριτικὰ τραγούδια. Among the ἀκρίται one was pre-eminent, who was surnamed Διγενής, because of his origin from a Greek noble mother and an Arab chieftain, who for her sake became a Christian. These particulars have become known to us since 1869, when a long and learned mediæval epos was published from a manuscript of Trebizond by Sathas and Legrand. Later on four more versions were discovered.

No other Greek hero—with perhaps the exception of Alexander the Great—won such popularity throughout the

Greek countries and beyond them as Digenis Acritis. In Cyprus his footsteps are still shown, as in ancient times were those of Hercules. More than a thousand poems are recorded from almost every Greek province, but most important of them are those sung in Pontus—Trebizond and Kerasus—and in the island of Cyprus.

From one of the Cypriote songs, which describes the wrestling between Digenis and Charon and uses the form "Ἑλενος instead of "Ἑλλην(ας), I conclude that the original form of the various versions was Pontic, from Pontos. It was natural, indeed, that the achievements of the Christian warriors against the Mahomedans should find in Cappadocia and Pontos the first poetical echo. In these songs it is very characteristic that the ἀκρίται were called ἑλλέν(ι)κα παλληκάρια (Hellenic heroes), not Ῥωμαῖοι, which was the official name of the subjects of the Eastern Roman Emperor. It is well known that the name "Ἑλλην for the Church had the meaning of a pagan, for which it was discarded from common Greek; but Asiatic Greeks continued to be proud of it and to associate with it almost superhuman bravery.

What a persistence in the old tradition! "C'est en vain," says M. Hubert Pernot, "qu'on chercherait aujourd'hui chez les autres peuples européens . . . une tradition presque millénaire, qui sous sa forme littéraire est accessible aux gens d'instruction moyenne et sous sa forme orale reste vivace parmi les illettrés" (*Etudes de littérature grecque moderne*, p. 70).

It is impossible to deal with Digenis Acritis on the basis only of the folk-poems and apart from the written epos. But there is an obvious difference between them in the representation of the hero. The Digenis of the pedantic poets is pious and loyal, although the Digenis of the popular songs is neither. He is rather rebellious. For my part, it is certain that the tradition of the folk-songs is older than that of the MS. Professor Bury, in a very interesting lecture at Oxford, showed how the legend of Acritis influenced later Greek romances of chivalry. The wrestling between Digenis and Charon is not contained in the epos and has

passed the Greek frontiers long ago ; a Russian song mentions Anika, which is the Greek epithet *ἀνίκητος* of Digenis. But more curious is that the memory of Digenis lives even among the Turks under the name of their hero Khioroglou, whose fame became proverbial.

Some of the popular songs of the islands Cyprus and Rhodes date back to the times of their occupation by the Franks. Cyprus remained under the French House of Lusignan for three centuries (1192-1489), but at the present day, as Mas Latrie observes, only a few magnificent Gothic monuments and a sprinkling of words of French origin remind us of their long dominion. The Cypriotes called the French king *ῥῆγα*, reserving the word *βασιλέα* for their national sovereigns at Constantinople, and the folk-songs mention *ῥῆγα* and *ῥῆγαίνα* (queen).

In Constantinople the Franks were unable to maintain themselves for more than 58 years. In 1261 Michael Paléologos, coming from the Greek kingdom of Nicæa, again entered the city, over which his dynasty reigned for almost two centuries. But the Turks pressed in upon the capital from every side since they occupied Adrianople in 1361. A folk-song of six versets still laments its fall.

The most moving *θρήνοι*, however, were versified after the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Then many a Jeremiah sat and lamented. One of the songs presents a ship coming down the Ægean and heavily laden not with merchandise, but with sad tidings. From it a cry arose, "The Turk is within the City." This impersonal voice, heralding the end of mediæval Greece, reminds us of another impersonal cry, which also over the waves announced the end of ancient Greece, calling from the island of Paxi "Great Pan is dead."

In some of the popular laments describing the great catastrophe the combination of deep sorrow and noble steadfastness is admirable. Perhaps the best of them is preserved in Trebizond and runs as follows :

When Constantine the Hellene was master of "The City" (Constantinople), the bells of Saint Sophia, the Great Church, used to ring. But while the *Te Deum* was being sung, a bird came and

sat on the door of the church. One of its wings was bleeding and on its other wing there was a slip of paper containing some words. But no one could read them; none knew what the words meant, not even the Patriarch himself. Then a boy, a good little boy (an angel), came forth to read it and wept as he read the words: "The Turks have entered the City." The Church was moved to tears; the King could not be consoled. But he grasped his light sword and his Hellenic spear (ἑλληνικὸν κοντάρι). He killed 300 Turks and 13 pashas, but he was left alone and then he fell. The Turks buried him in a green field.

According to another lament, during the last service in Saint Sophia,

a voice came from the heavens from the mouth of an archangel: "Priests take the gospel and you, candles, be extinguished. It is the will of God that the city should become Turkish." The Holy Virgin wept, the holy ikons were moved to tears. But, Holy Virgin, weep not. After long, long years they shall again be yours.

There is no need for a Greek to have seen that incomparable church; it is enough for him to have once heard these verses—and who of us has not?—in order to feel always an anguish of suspense and to ask himself whether the "years" of the anonymous prophet will be fulfilled.

But the passing years brought a heavy toll of sufferings. Eight years after Constantinople the Greek kingdom of Trebizond was conquered in 1461. In 1570 Cyprus was captured by the Turks, and a century later, in 1669, Crete. This blow was a heavy one indeed; for Crete was the last refuge of Byzantine learning and art; and, further, a new poetry had begun to blossom there—lyrics, tragedies, comedies, and lastly a long epos, which became the national epos of Modern Greece, and was spread as folk-poem.

Errotocritos, as it is called after the name of its hero, combines bygone Frankish chivalry with vague reminiscences of Greek antiquity. It has Athens for its scene, and the action falls in the times "when the Hellenes were yet masters" (ποῦ οἱ Ἕλληνες ᾤριζαν). The poem seems to have been written a few years before 1669, and according to its last verses was the work of Vicenzos Cornaros. The man is unknown, but he

was the last and not the least poet before the resurrection of Greece.

Only the Ionian islands now survived the Turkish deluge, and there, especially in Zante and Corfu, as we shall see, new Greek poetry revived.

The summits, too, of the Greek mountains—particularly those of Olympus, the ancient home of the gods, and its neighbour Ossa or Kissavos—were never conquered. It is there that all the youth who refused to bow beneath the Ottoman yoke found refuge and liberty. These men, who continued the achievements of the ἀκρίται, were called κλέφτες, brigands—brigands against the Turks—and their songs are the famous κλέφτικα τραγούδια.

Never after Aeschylus has the war spirit found such noble expression in verse. *The Song of Vasilis* typifies the sentiments of the young men, the *Song of Kitsos* those of the mothers. Kitsos' mother says to him :

It were better, my son, to have perished thyself, to have lost thy head than to lose the arms, left to thee by thy fathers. (Abbot.)

In the *Song of Zedros* this dead κλέφτης is presented saying :

I complain not of death, but I think it grievous and shameful that the enemy will learn of it and will go to Elasson. I pray my companions and all the heroes to remember my house and my poor wife, to see to my son, who is little and not full-grown and knows nothing of fighting.

This hero, even after his death, thinks like the Homeric Hector, not for himself but for Andromache and for his little Astyanax.

The death of a κλέφτης, as it is pictured in *Demos' Song* (τοῦ Δήμου τὸ τραγούδι), shows us how the κλέφτες had the same view of the future life as the heroes of the Νέκυια in the *Odyssey*—that is to say, they wished it to be a continuation of the present.

Make my tomb large and let it be high, that I may stand upright and fight and turn and load my gun. And on my right hand leave a window that the swallows may come to bring me the spring and the nightingales may tell me of the beautiful May.

Reading the cleftic songs, we often learn from them of heroic deeds which no historian had thought fit to record. *The Song of Despo* (τῆς Δέσπως τὸ τραγούδι) describes the tragic end of a family of Epirus after long resistance to the Albanians of Ali Pasha.

The historical folk-poetry expired with the great war of independence. The pre-eminent heroes, like Kolocotronis, Botzaris, Andritsos, Diacos, had their songs. In one of them Diacos, who was put on a spit, gives the following answer to the Turks :—

Σκυλιὰ, καὶ ἂν μὲ σουβλίσετε, ἓνας Γραικὸς ἐχάθη.

“If you put me on the spit, only one Greek will be perished.”

II.

Let us now come to the fictitious songs. As Fauriel says, “It is in the songs, of which the subject is fictitious, that the imagination of Greek people is manifested with rich variety, liberty and strength.” Greek παραλογές (ballads) are numerous and very characteristic. But the best of them belong to the acritic cycle, and consequently their origin lies in Asia Minor.

I will outline the plot of three of them and conclude with some general remarks on Greek folk-poetry.

The first, ὁ Αἰχμάλωτος (the Captive), is a short translation of a song of Kerasus in Pontus. The poem is very dramatic and typical. It has come down to us from the period of the first Mahomedan invasions and preserves the name Ῥωμανία for the Byzantine or Greek Empire. The Prisoner says :—

“When the Turks invaded Romania, they entered the church, and carried away the holy ikons. At that time they carried away my mother also, when about to give birth to me. She bore me in Emir Ali’s house. Openly my mother played with me, but secretly gave me this advice: ‘My son, if you live and grow up, fly away to Romania; out there you will find your father, called Andronicos, and also Xanthinos, your brother.’ The prisoner grew into a sturdy lad and armed himself. He took a light sword and a Hellenic spear, and he arrived at Denis. ‘Dear stars, come lower, and thou, dear moon, too, and show me the road to Romania’ (Greece).

The stars came lower and the moon came down, and they showed him the road which led to Romania. On his way he met an old man and a young one and a fight began between the two young men. They drew their swords, but their swords became locked and they could not strike each other. They strove to stab each other with their spears, but they, too, became locked and they could not strike each other." Then the old man, marvelling, asked the traveller of his parents, and thus the recognition takes place between them.

The Ballad of 'Ηλιογέννητη (the Daughter of the Sun) appears to re-echo the love of Digenis Acritis. But the anonymous minstrel aimed rather at depicting the results of a fair maiden's scorn and the potency of witchcraft. In this poem admirable above all is the fascinating atmosphere, which surrounds the Sun-maiden with her 400 slaves within the tower, the door of which is made of silver. There she receives the envoys sent by the hero, Constantine, to ask her hand, and curtly refuses his proposal. But at the end she graciously gives them, as a present, a tress of her hair. Constantine, learning of the refusal, took the tress and went with it to a sorceress. She gave him three apples, saying: "Throw one into the street, to stop the wayfarers; another into the river, to stop its waters; and the third within her door, to bring her to thee." When the girl saw the apple she fainted and raved. At midnight she said to her maidens: "Light green candles and red lanterns because the bell is ringing and I must go to the Church of the Holy Virgin." They explained to her that it was all a delusion, but when she rose up alone in the darkness with bare head and bare feet the passers-by, astonished, said, "Who saw the sun by night?" The girl, exhausted, prayed the god to prove her innocence by a lightning. A flash illuminated the sky and the spell was broken.

The third Greek-Asiatic ballad, *The Song of the Dead Brother*, had an astonishing vogue. The plot is as follows: A mother had nine sons and one daughter, called 'Αρετή. Suitors for her hand came from Babylon, but her eight brothers rejected the offers. Constantine alone insisted on giving the girl; and when the mother asked him, "When

Death comes to me, who will bring her home ? ” he took an oath, “ By the heavens above, I will bring her.” But after the marriage came misfortune and pestilence. All the nine sons died. The mother remained alone and wept on their tombs. But upon Constantine’s tomb she called down curses, because he had sent away Areté into a far country. Then the earth shook and the dead man arose. He took a cloud for his steed and by moonlight he galloped away to bring back his sister. He found her combing her hair by the window. He called her in haste and carried her off mounted behind him on the horse. But as they sped along, the birds were singing : “ Who has seen a fair maiden with a dead corpse ? ” Areté asked him whether he heard the song of the birds. He replied, “ Let the birds sing.” A little later she said to him, “ I fear thee, brother ; you smell of incense.”—“ Last night I went to the church,” he replies.—“ Where is thy fair hair and thy moustache ? ”—“ I was ill and lost them.” But when they approached the church, Constantine disappeared. Areté, left alone, proceeded home. The door and the windows were shut. She knocked, but heard from inside, “ If thou art Charon, I have no more children.” Areté cried out who she was ; her mother came down, but upon embracing each other, they both fell dead.

The origin of this ballad is a problem. You may remember the English ballad of Clerk Saunders and Margaret ; the pathetic verses

My mouth is full cold, Margaret ;
It has the smell, now, of the ground

(William Allingham, *The Ballad Book*, 1865) present the same picture. Well known also is Bürger’s *Lenora*, which the German poet wrote on the basis of a folk ballad. The Greek ballad spread among the Albanians and the Slavs of the Balkan peninsula, and from the Serbians, who have an excellent version, passed to the Little Russians. Wollner, the editor of four similar Russian songs, thought that the Slavonic song was the original. But the Bulgarian Dr. Ivan Schischmanow, publishing 78 Bulgarian and 5

Roumanian versions, accepted Professor Politis's view, that the Greek song was the common original. Politis supposes that the legend comes down from antiquity. In Phlegon's First book, *Περὶ θαυμασίων* (On marvels), the dead girl Philinnion comes to her fiancé three nights and disappears when her parents see her. Be that as it may, the poetical value of this Greek ballad is unrivalled. Tommaseo says that "compared with this Areté, Bürger's *Lenora* is *una amplificazione retorica*" (a rhetorical amplification). What I myself admire in it is the art of prolonging the recognition of the brother's death and keeping every detail under the marvellous mystery of the night.

Almost in all Greek folk poems clearness and brevity are their principal features. There is no superfluous word, save in the case when the same verse is repeated in a narration, as by Homer. The various recognitions—of a mother and a daughter, two brothers, brother and sister, husband and wife—are always skilfully and naturally carried out. The similes employed are also fresh, even when they come down from ancient times. For instance, a verse describing a young girl laughing, says:—

‘Οποῦ γελᾷ καὶ πέφτουνε τὰ ῥόδα στὴν ποδιά της

“She laughs and roses fall at her feet.”

A verse of Musaeus says almost the same thing about Hero's gait, but this is better. Another small poem says:—

Κόκκινο χεῖλι ἐφίλησα κ' ἔβαψε τὸ δικό μου
καὶ στὸ μαντήλι τῶσινρα κ' ἔβαψε τὸ μαντήλι
καὶ στὸ ποτάμι τῶπλυνα κ' ἔβαψε τὸ ποτάμι.

I kissed red lips and my lip was painted red;
I wiped it with a handkerchief and it tinged red;
I washed it in a river and it also was dyed red.

This reminds us of a verse of Nonnus (VII, 222) about Semele:—

καὶ ῥοδέοις μελέεσσιν ἐφοινίχθη μέλαν ὕδωρ

“The dark water was painted red with her rosy body.”

The resemblance of modern and ancient Greek verse has impressed several scholars. But no explanation of it

has been put forward. Of course, the anonymous versifiers had never read the classics. But a confused reminiscence may well have remained in the following way. Many verses of the bucolics and many of the epigrams of the anthology were translated into more intelligible iambic verses during the twelfth century in the romances of Theodorus Prodromus and Nicetas Eugenianus. The poets of the Frankish period have imitated them. Perhaps this is the missing link. But in several cases there is another explanation, less elaborate and more natural. If, for instance, the Cypriote peasant poet, turning to the Sun, says very simply :—

"*Ἡλιε, ποῦ πᾶς στὴν μάναν σου, Ἡλιε, ποῦ πᾶς νὰ δύσῃς,
Ἄν δῇς καὶ τὴν ἀγάπην μου, νὰ μοῦ τὴν χαιρετίσῃς.*"

("Sun, who art going to thy mother, Sun, who art going to set, if thou see my beloved also, bring her my greetings.")

he surely never read Stesichorus, in order to know that the Sun has a mother and a family, and he never read Sophocles to know that Ajax also had sent his greetings to his own mother by the same messenger. But the unknown poet had the same sky, and the same familiarity with the same Sun. This is also the reason of the wonderful plasticity of these poems. As it has been noticed, in this poetry everything speaks. Not only the horses of the ἀκρίται, like those of Achilles, but also birds, trees and mountains. The moon speaks to the wave, the wave to the oar, the oar to the sailor.

If the dead speak, the reason is, I think, that they used, during all the ancient times, to tell their admirable funeral epigrams in the first person. Why the Greek nature speaks, is explained by Carducci in this magnificent stanza :—

Muoiono gli altri dei ; di Grecia inumi
Non sanno occaso ; ci dormon nei materni
Tronchi e nei fiori, sopra i monti, i fiumi
I mari eterni.

("The other gods die ; the deities of Greece know not death ; they are sleeping in their maternal trees and in the flowers, upon the mountains, the rivers, the eternal seas.")

As a fact, the names and the shadows of some of our ancient gods still survive. In Cyprus some summits preserve the names of Δίας (Zeus), and other places are called Ἀπέλλωνας (Apollo), and many monuments are attributed to the Πήγαινα, which is a translation of Φάνασσα, as Aphrodite was called there.

But other gods are still worshipped and show their kindness. The Μοῖρες (the Fates) are always three and bring the end of life, but they are also present on every birth. Charon himself is an ἱλεως θεός (a mild deity), having a mother and a wife. He is not a dreadful skeleton ; he is a young man riding on a black horse and challenging boys to wrestling. Many Nereïds, Νεραιίδες, do live still on sea shores, or in the springs and fountains, and they still snatch away young men—like Hylas—but only to make them happy. In the sea some Γοργόνες (Gorgons) are wandering. One of them is still anxious about King Alexander the Great. She asks the sailors, and they must offer a reply, and then the Gorgon does not hurt them. The reply must be always the same, and is a deeply symbolical one : “ King Alexander is still living and reigning ! ”

SIMOS MENARDOS.

SACRIFICE

O WOMANHOOD.

How still and strong must be
Thy heart's deep consciousness
To bear this flood-tide of the mind
That wounds and breaks God's purpose.
Selfless and patient must thy spirit be
To mend and make anew the fabric
For the child to weave
Into the dreams and beauty of his destiny.

Life is eternal.
All the lost joys are hidden in her heart
And live again when youth and childhood
Meet in motherhood.

BELFRAGE GILBERTSON.

MEN WILL REMEMBER
IN PRAISE OF HELLAS

"I think men will remember us even hereafter."

(*Sappho*, preserved in Dio Chrysostom, A.D. 100.)

"**M**EN will, I think, remember us hereafter,"
Sang in times past the poetess immortal,
Lesbian Sappho ; golden was her utterance,
Golden her music.

Sang she enthroned beside the seas' deep azure,
Sang amid gleaming marble carved and painted,
Marble and bronze-work, bronze and beaten silver,
In Mytilene.

Over her head was spread a Tyrian awning,
Lavishly dyed ; behind her fans of peacock
Aided cool Zephyr dallying with slow foot
Over the seaways.

Blue the deep sea shone, softer blue the clear sky ;
Through the dark pine trees Zephyr ever dallied,
Whispering lovesongs, whispering to the roses
Far off, divine, things.

Trancèd the world lay, iridescent, splendid,
Shot with the lovely lustres of the rainbow,
Silent, enchanted, save from where beneath her,
Like a bee's humming,

Murm'rous a noise confused came floating upward,
Faint like the tang of seafoam vaguely scented,
Where far beneath a Syrian penteconter
Turned her beak outward ;

Turned her beak outward to the lands of morning,
Southward and westward to the coasts of Hellas
Where from her mossy couch of fragrant violets,
Dew-drenched, ambrosial,

From dappled pools, from hyacinthine stretches,
Sun-litten sward, tree-shaded, crocus-covered,
Thick with narcissi, golden-haired, clear-sighted,
Perfect in body,

Perfect as though from living rose-flushed marble
Some hand divine had fashioned her, Greek Beauty,
Hymned at her birth by silver-throated Helios,
Hymned by the Muses,

Rose from her fragrant bed of dew-drenched violets,
E'en as from full-blown foam rose Aphroditè,
Rose in her youth superb, a radiant glory,
Fronting the sunrise.

Murm'rous a noise confused came floating upward ;
Over the wall's edge Sappho leaned to listen,
Leaned her slim, lovely body o'er the wall's edge ;
Waved it a parting.

" Turn thy beak south," sang she, " O, pentecònter
Favouring winds fill full thy straining canvas !
Turn thee away from sombre Asian godhoods,
Deities monstrous !

Turn thee from Asshur's mad abominations,
Mountainlike temples, palaces stupendous,
Red with the blood of toiling generations,
Nineveh's captives !

Turn thee from Babylon's enamelled gateways,
Towering battlements, barbaric splendours,
Where rules 'mid all the wealth of all the nations
Nebuchadrezzar !

Turn thee from dwindling Thebes and white-walled
Memphis,
World-ancient Egypt tottering to her dotage,
In ever straiter swathings of tradition
Bound like a mummy !

Not even we, the golden-sandalled morning's
Very delight, on whom the honey-dropping
Melody of the Muses has descended
Like a bright blessing,

Not even we can wake her from her slumber,
Not the Maeonian chant, not Troy's dire story,
Not the undying fame that haunts for ever
Tragic Mycenae,

Not all the songs now sung nor all that will be,
Ringing us deathless down the unending ages
In language moulded to a singing splendour
Meet for immortals,

Compact of sunlight, glowing like sun-tinted
Hebè-poured nectar for the gods to drink of,
Fragrant as the wild thyme's treasure culled by
Bees on Hymettus !

Leave her to perish ! Ours the future day is,
Ours the meridian mind that fronts clear sunlight,
Four-square to combat all the winds of heaven ;
North wind and south wind,

East wind and west wind blowing on us, bracing
Tense nerves and sinews into godlike action,
Whether of word or deed, till we have fashioned
Wisdom and beauty,

Poesy, painting, sculpture, architecture,
Leaving on each the mark of our perfection,
Glimmering heights to stir to emulation
All who come after.

O, I must think that never in the world yet
Passed through men's minds such visions, woke such
thronging,
Strong-winged desires, welled in men's hearts such sun-lit
Fountains of singing.

Never yet brooded over carven marble
So much of godlike, so much of man's spirit
Possessed at last of limitless dominion,
One with the Godhead.

We have brought down from heaven the fire Promethean
First of the sons of men ; from us it brightens
Till it becomes a steady light enfolding
All of earth's boundaries.

Some song of ours—so perfect is our music,
So much the live embodiment of beauty—
Shall make this summer day in Mytilene,
Heavy with roses,

Lulled by scarce-moving winds' and waves' soft singing,
Vivid, without a cloud, shall make me passionate,
Sighing out beauty, filled to overflowing
With lyric longing,

As clear to eyes and ears unknown, long after
We with our tameless fire, our eagle passion,
Are but as formless dust, unnamed, forgotten,
Blown willy-nilly,

As though they stood beside me, gazed upon me,
Even as late Alcaeus gazed and faltering,
Held in constraint by love's bewildering madness,
Pleadingly whispered

Passionate words disjointed ; called me sorceress,
Violet-eyed, wile-weaving, sweetly-smiling,
Till spite of all the Artemis within me,
All my rebukings,

Like a deep flood all-lovely joy possessed me,
Maidenlike pride of conquest leapt within me,
Till my blood sang with very exultation,
Sang and aye sings still !

Haply this day of utter, utter magic,
That slowly sinks beneath the rim of ocean,
Waiting to greet with welcome healer Hesperus,
 Bringer of quietness,

Hesperus, herald of night's maiden mistress,
Pouring the dews of sleep on weary mortals,
Chaining with linkèd harmonies him even,
 Delphian Apollo,

While unobserved of human eyes she passes,
By Hyades and Pleiades attended,
Sovereign o'er all the singing hosts of heaven,
 Chaste, silver-footed ;

Haply this day crowned with co-equal splendour,
Splendour of sunlight, splendour of full-flooding
Moon's argent loveliness and cool, clear starlight,
 Fragrance and roses,

Beauty of marble, bronze, or beaten silver,
Beauty of bright-hued web from Tyre or Sidon,
Beauty of proud, swift, Syrian penteconter,
 Caught and made vocal,

Visible also, piercing through me singing
The sombre veil that hides from us the endless
Course that unwearied runner Time must traverse
 Till the world's ending,

Onward, aye, onward to such distant ages
Sickens and faints the failing heart to think of,
Further and further from this vital moment
 We live and die in,

Will not die wholly, but will be remembered—
O, the sweet wonder of it !—when this marble
Presents of all its light and shade unmeaning,
 Time-defaced rondures,

This beaten silver's melted to base uses,
This web, moth-eaten, rotten, all its colours
Faded to one monotony of drabness,
Falls into pieces,

And I, O, passionate heart of mine, no longer
Bathe me in beauty, beauty for my garment,
Beauty my breath, till all my vibrant being's
One living music,

Whether I walk by yellow sandy stretches
'Neath the fond moon, lap me in cool, cool water,
Buoyant sea-surges, quaff me ruby vintage
Under the vine-leaves,

Let sunlight laugh and play about my body,
Winds kiss my unbound tresses, thrill and tremble
When beloved footsteps pledge me the all-constraining
Glory of kisses.

Something of me I know will be remembered,
Something survive death's ultimate disaster ;
Beauty alone is worthy of remembrance,
Loveliness dies not ! "

So sang the Tenth Muse, and the years rolled over ;
Vanished the Persian, faded the bloom of Hellas,
Broke in his hand the sceptre of the Roman,
Passed the gods also ;

Flourished an alien creed that knew not beauty
In an impoverished world that knew not order,
Booty of Teuton, booty of the Arab,
Booty of priestcraft ;

Gathered new peoples ; empires rose and perished ;
Over new-charted seas swarmed new armadas,
Argosies rifling distant lands unknown to
Lesbian Sappho.

MEN WILL REMEMBER

171

Yet through it all stole down the misty centuries,
Stole out of time long dead, one strain of music :

“ Men will, I think, remember us hereafter,”

Confident, wistful.

And after twice a thousand years one walking

’Mid the mean clatter of unlovely London

Such a June day as even *her* drab spaces

Danced for delight in,

Felt that world-ancient message like a wingèd

Shaft of pure inspiration, singing, singing

Through heart and brain till heart and brain beheld her,

Peerless, immortal,

Violet-eyed, wile-weaving, sweetly-smiling,

Throned as of yore ’mid marble carved and painted,

Marble and bronze-work, bronze and beaten silver,

In Mytilene,

’Neath a bright awning, fanned by peacock feathers ;

Caught, too, the rose scents, heard the penteconter’s

Murmur of bees, and like a harp winds played on,

Felt his heart answer :

“ Beauty alone is worthy of remembrance ;

Loveliness dies not. O, Bewildering Wonder,

Even as in old time overpast thou sangest,

Men have remembered ! ”

E. B. W. CHAPPELOW.

TO MY FIRST LOVE

YOU say my love for you will tire,
Grow pale and wither in the noon-day heat

As roses in a garden bloom

Too soon.

You say my words are wrought of fire

That flickers for an instant and dies out

Upon the hearthstone of my dreams,
Moonbeams.
You say these kisses will grow cold
That burn so passionately now,
You say they too with love must die
And sigh—

If all you say, my dear, is true,
And words, thoughts, feelings vanish into dust,
And I should grow estranged from you
Whom once I loved so strongly and so well,
Know only this, that of the years we spent
I gave you what I'll never give again,
The first white flame of Holiness
Burning in Heart and Brain.

PETER RAYMOND.

MASQUERADE

I FLED from the turbulent laughter,
I hid from the insolent eyes,
As the flock of dishevelled dancers
Discarded their thin disguise.

Draggled and torn and panting
I fled to the gleaming pool,
Where the long, lithe grass about me
Felt dewy-wet and cool.

No wind shook out the willows
Across the star-spun sky,
No bird among the branches
Gave sweet melodious cry.

Down to the silent waters
I bent my head to see,
The tragic I unmasking
The gay Myself to Me.

JOYCE SAMBROOK.

THE POETRY OF GEORGE MEREDITH

AS a novelist, George Meredith cannot fail to be caviare to that section of the public who rave about the books of Mrs. Florence Barclay and Miss Ethel M. Dell. He may always remain so. As a poet, his note is even more difficult of general appreciation. For the life work of George Meredith, both in prose and verse, is a revolutionary one, in so far as it touches the relations of Woman and Man. *Modern Love* is a long poem—a psychological analysis—as full of thought as any work of Browning's most obscure period; but it has a rare lyrical beauty that considerably helps the understanding.

Then each applied to each that fatal knife
Deep questioning, which probes to endless dole.
Ah! what a dusty answer gets the soul
When hot for certainties in this our life!—
In tragic hints here see what evermore
Moves dark as yonder midnight ocean's force,
Thundering like ramping hosts of warrior horse,
To throw that faint thin line upon the shore!

Since Meredith began to voice his aspirations toward emancipating Woman from the old sentimental thrall of oak for parasitic mistletoe much water has found its way down to the sea. Woman herself has now almost wholly realised that the direct insult a man can offer her is the love that merely "cherishes" and does not "liberate." Man has enjoyed too long this monopoly of being a sort of demi-god to whom helpless and lovely creatures are to look for protection and "permission to live." But that idea is rapidly changing, thanks to our greathearted women themselves!

Ask, is Love *divine*?
Voices all are, ay!
Question for the sigh
There's a common sigh.
Would we through our years,
Love forgo,
Quit of scars and tears?
Ah, but *no, no, no*!

It is this attitude toward woman and the marriage-tie

which makes Meredith essentially a poet to study with care. To the readers of his novels it is superogatory to warn the mind against any tendency to wander. If his prose is difficult to read, his verse is equally hard, although so full of lyrical fire and salt. Unlike most poets (Swinburne especially) Meredith would never stoop to the sacrifice of sense to mere music. Each sentence belongs to its neighbour. Hear the soulful energy in this :

Joy is fleet,
Sorrow slow.
Love so sweet,
Sorrow will sow.
Love that has flown
Ere day's decline,
Love to have known,
Sorrow, to mine !

Here we have a mystic love of Beauty in the abstract, but withal a significant message that will strike the least technical of understandings, by its very weight of thought. I know no other poet whose pages I am so apt to linger over, while the mind strays away into abstract fields of speculation, as to the spiritual import of the words just read. How intensely real, and yet how dream-provoking, is the following :—

The soft light wind went laden to death
With smell of the orange in flower ;
The light leaves prattled to neighbour ears ;
The bird of the passion sang over his tears ;
The night named hour by hour.

Sang loud, sang low, the rapturous bird
Till the yellow hour was nigh,
Behind the folds of a darker cloud ;
He chuckled, he sobbed, aloud, aloud ;
The voice between earth and sky.

I have known verse-loving friends reject Meredith's poetry as too utterly vague for their comprehension. But, surely, here is the reverential resignation of a keen intellect to the universal rule, a complete obedience to cosmic law ? There is the mental harmony of the poet with himself—

the ascendancy of his higher over his lower nature, of his reason over his passion, of his will over his appetites. Let us consider the texture of this *Ballad of Past Meridian*—

Last night returning from my twilight walk
 I met the grey mist Death, whose eyeless brow
 Was bent on me and from his hand of chalk
 He reach'd me flow'rs as from a wither'd bough :
 O Death, what bitter nosegays givest thou !

Death said " I gather " and pursued his way,
 Another stood by me, a shape in stone,
 Sword-hack'd and iron-stain'd, with breasts of clay,
 And metal veins that sometimes fiery shone :
 O Life, how naked and how hard when known !

Life said : " As thou hast cav'd me, such am I ! "
 Then Mem'ry, like the nightjar on the pine
 And sightless hope, a woodlark in night sky,
 Join'd notes of death and life till night's decline :
 O Death, O Life, those inwound notes are mine.

That is so ethical an enquiry that one needs to read it over half-a-dozen times. But the wonderful truth emerges like a golden vision : that it is only a study of Nature, under both aspects of Life and Death, that God reveals Himself. It is, as the poet says in another place :

They have no song, the sedges dry,
 And still they sing :
 It is *within my breast* they sing ;
 As I pass by !

Thus Meredith rests on one of the topmost peaks of Parnassus. He has climbed his way slowly and laboriously up the slopes, but now he stands calmly confronting the Infinite, prepared to accept whatever next God will send to him. In one poem on *Woodland Peace* he states his discovery that Nature only reveals herself after long and patient wooing :

And this the woodland saith :
 I know not hope or fear ;
 I take whate'er may come ;

I raise my head to aspects fair,
From foul I turn away.

Meredith, throughout his random rhymes, is always insisting that man must keep himself unspotted from contact with materialism of the grosser kind. If man would know Nature, if he would have sentiment and rapture in his soul, he must emancipate his spirit from formula and dogma. I have not often found a sweeter note in modern poetry than the following :

Lovely are the curves of the white owl sweeping
Wavy in the dusk lit by one large star.
Lone of the fir-branch, his rattle-note unvaried,
Brooding o'er the gloom, spins the brown evejar ;
Darker grows the valley, more and more forgetting :
So were it with me if forgetting could be willed.
Tell the grassy hollow that holds the bubbling well-spring,
Tell it to forget the source that keeps it filled.

Mother of the dews, dark eye-lashed twilight,
Low-lidded twilight, o'er the valley's brim,
Rounding on thy breast sings the dew-delighted skylark,
Clear as though the dewdrops had their voice in him.
Hidden where the rose-flush drinks the rayless planet,
Fountain full he pours the spraying fountain-showers.
Let me hear her laughter, I would have her ever
Cool as dew in twilight, the lark above the flowers.

This philosophic acceptance of life, combined with revolt against the artificialities imposed by man's coarse rending of Nature's Laws, makes Meredith a moral teacher of exceptional power. In the verses just quoted the sensual is wholly lost in the spiritual, the heart-passion is made subject to the brain-clearness of perception. Meredith is among the noblest minds since Shakespeare. He is one of the few with whom we can tread the upland path without fear of taking a wrong turning into some unexpected abyss of pain. After admitting that he is often obscure, and that the greater part of his work can only be understood and valued after careful study, we yet know that he is one of the Immortals, "A deeper voice above life's storm !"

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

WIRELESS IN A SICK-ROOM

A LITTLE isolation of four walls,
High in a sombre Glasgow tenement,
Is all his visible world, since battle bent
Its thieving shadow over him and stole
His sturdy manhood. Here at intervals,
Breaking upon his quietness, the roll
Of traffic comes from the suburban street,
And the companionship of passing feet ;
While in the tyranny of weakness pent,
Like pools of water parted from the tide,
His days are set aside.

But he is not alone, for still, behind
The little window and the latched door,
Science is his, and power to explore
The world's tremendous continents of thought.
And though his limbs are helpless and confined,
To his remote imprisonment are brought—
Borne upon wings of air across the earth—
The breadths of intellect, the heights of mirth,
So that he still holds commune with his kind,
And in his narrow dwelling-place he hears
The movement of the years.

His comrades in the friendly evening
Are poet and musician—the beat
Of mighty music keeps his spirit sweet,
And the slow hours are made alive with song.
He will not walk again, and yet the swing
Of the dance comes to him and sets his long
Thin fingers keeping time. His little space
Of life is charmed out of the commonplace
Of mute monotony and suffering,
For the pageant of man with epoch-making tread
Passes his quiet bed.

But best he loves the placid Sunday night,
After the bells have swung above the town,

Calling the people church-ward from the crown
 Of star-framed steeples, and a sudden spell
 Of rest has fallen. Then across the height
 Of some great fane he hears the organ swell,
 And voices joined in an exultant psalm,
 Till deep within he feels a subtle calm,
 And his unfettered spirit, rising light
 Above the littleness of earth and sea,
 Touches Eternity.

NANCY POLLOK.

A GIPSY GIRL

A GIPSY girl, a Romany,
 Looked down from Witcombe Hill
 With night behind her gathering
 And dusk upon her hair;
 Half shadowed were her velvet eyes,
 Her dancing feet were still
 And tranquil after junketing
 At Whitonbury Fair.

A ragged little petticoat
 Caught up against her breast
 Held in it all the treasury
 Her magic could provide
 Of every kind of weather
 From the highest mountain's crest
 To the winds and sobbing waters
 Of an outgoing tide.

And clear her careless honeyed voice
 Rang over Witcombe Hill:
 "Cross my hand with gold and learn
 The measure of your days,
 The sun to kiss your ivory throat
 And with a passion fill
 The dreary spaces of your heart
 And drooping dreamy ways.

"Cross my hand with silver,
 Its witchery will gain
 The farmer's grudging gratitude
 When England's valleys gleam
 With rain and misty grey lights,
 The fruitful shining rain
 Shimmering like a curtain
 With ribands of white steam.

"Cross my hand with copper—
 The children's happiness
 And tribute can be reckoned on
 For every change will please,
 The wind to chaunt, the frost to bite,
 The sun to burn or bless,
 The clustered flowers of summer
 Or solitary trees.

"But if there be no homage paid
 Beware! my anger fires
 And sparks flare out to kindle
 The lightning's vivid blaze ;
 I set the thunder crashing
 Across the sullen shires
 As Death comes hunting with the storm
 And numbered are your days."

M. J. HAMILTON.

THE BIRTH OF VENUS (AFTER BOTTICELLI)

THE night has almost run,
 But yet a hush of wonder seals the earth ;
 The waves are stilled ; no songbird's artless mirth
 Enchants the silence, whence the rising sun
 Shall with his brazen clarions hail the birth
 Of the glad Goddess from the dancing foam.
 Low in the East the Light
 Quickens to rose. The clouds, like butterflies
 In early Summer, skim the ground or rise
 In rainbow squadrons till the air is bright,

And all the spreading radiance of the skies
 Paints with a thousand hues her ocean home.
 Slowly across the sea,
 As though sweet slumber still enchained each limb,
 Poised like a flower upon the shell's curved rim,
 While sportive Zephyrs twine the gaiety
 Of her light tresses' gold about her slim
 And lovely body, fresh as morning's pearls,
 She comes to waiting men.
 Before her feet the Nereïds laughing go,
 While on their horns the bearded Tritons blow
 A merry lilt to grace her road, or then,
 Plunging to where undying gardens glow,
 Rob their rich spoil to crown her wayward curls.
 Proud and serene she moves.
 Her eyes are full of dreams, and far-off things
 Lurk in her tender smile. A thousand Springs
 Each greener than the last, a thousand loves
 That steal their magic from the hour when sings,
 Beneath the stars, the mournful nightingale ;
 New faiths, old mysteries,
 And how that beauty reigns supreme and pure,
 Untouched by follies where men seek a cure
 For the sick humours of a world that dies ;
 Beauty that shall to utmost time endure,
 Though other Gods upon their thrones grow pale.

DOROTHY EWENS.

* * *

We welcome the return to active participation in Poetry Society work of Mrs. Alice Hunt Bartlett, and it is particularly gratifying to have her again in charge of the American interests of the Poetry Review as well as her association in a representative capacity with the general work of The Poetry Society. Her temporary withdrawal through serious and prolonged illness has been a severe handicap on the American developments initiated by her. An English member, commenting on POETRY REVIEW features, wrote some months ago, "I did enjoy the title as well as the substance of your '*Dynamics of American Poetry*,'—the best example of the well chosen word (*le mot juste*) that I know."

MECHANISM OR SPONTANEITY ?

IT would appear that this is an age in which we are vociferously instructed in the correct method of performing every action. The air reverberates with orders concerning food ; we are told how we ought to sleep, to walk, to breathe. Naturalness and the joyousness of spontaneity are at a discount ; we are in danger of imitating marionettes, or resembling the awful mechanical creatures of that powerful play which showed us hideous man—made men and women, capable and strong, but entirely soulless.

This taught mechanism thrusts itself into the kingdom of Poetry and threatens to annihilate it. We are on the unspeakably damnable plane where we aim at transposing Tennyson's adoring cry at the singing of Maud, "Not her, not her, but a voice," to "Not her, not her, but a loud-speaker."

Let us say, once and for all time, that Poetry never soars by instruction. You may tell a neophyte that he should insert a "the" or omit a "that," and you may prate of "rhythmic" tones or the correct formation of a sonnet until strength fails you, but you will never make a poet thereby. Nor will you, while time lasts, tune the ears of all men to catch true Poetry. The voice and the ear are the gifts of the gods.

Undoubtedly, on these premises, a writer of verse may retort, "My work is true Poetry, 'tis your ear that is at fault." Granted, but, on the other hand, are we compelled to accept evenly spaced lines that convey no meaning whatsoever merely because their author considers them to be Poetry ?

There reverberates to this day an echo of the clamorous protest against Browning because he enveloped his meaning in unusual and somewhat difficult phraseology. At the same time his meaning, or underlying thought, was there and was worth the pains of securing. His phraseology was not his glory. Had he possessed a more highly sensitive ear he would probably have discarded it. Must we accept, then, the wildest juxtaposition of words when no meaning underlies them ? A celebrated critic may

rejoice in the line, "Beelzebub called for his syllabub." For ourselves, its mere pertness raises no smile, let alone any joy. Edith Sitwell finds it complacently easy to repeat "serres chaudes" three times, "crinoline" six times, and "Balmoral" and "Windsor," and "pelerine" and "pelisse" reoccur at odd moments, and yet in spite of these raps of reiteration she does not convey any truth or reality, nor even a dream, unless nightmare is a dream worth recording. And what ails our English tongue that we are pelted with such tags of French as "à l'Amades," "gris bois," "ponceau gros d'hiver," "velours d'Afrique," "Debout les morts," and the like? What right have these in *Rustic Elegies* (Duckworth and Co.)? Sir Edmund Gosse invites a reader of Edith Sitwell's outpourings to be "candid." What can the most candid mind make of the lines under the title *Neptune*?

To see me fire my pistol
Through the distance blue as my coat;
Like Wellington, Byron, the Marquis of Bristol,
Buzbied great trees float.

or under *Robinson Crusoe*?

And Robinson Crusoe
Rues so
The bright and foxy beer,—
But he finds fresh isles in a negress' smiles,—
The poxy doxy dear.

And if it be unfair to select only such lines, there is the piece, *The Heart and the Hambone*. In this the Heart speaks what is understandable, but it is a very simple pathos, and the "Girl's" expression, twice repeated, "I, too, have known the terrible Gehenna of the bone deserted by the flesh," sounds well, but is mostly sound. It may be argued that there are a few pregnant lines at the conclusion of the volume, but do the ugly, grotesque and meaningless that so greatly outnumber them justify the author's apparent claim to fame? What should we feel if Chopin had commenced his Funeral March with the jig of "Pop goes the Weasel"?

The disturbing clang of the mechanical figures of the R.U.R. echoes through *Rustic Elegies*. We suspect that the hand that strikes the lyre is not that of Orpheus if it does not call our spirit from the dim underworld back to light and love, or power ; or even such a cry as this :

There, poised enthralled 'mid elemental powers
Mighty with fate and grand with destiny,
I felt the purge and thrill of energies
That shame man's lesser moments, felt in all
The rhythm and motion a summons and a power.

This is the expression of James Mackereth's sensations on being in a great storm—one, as it were, with the boom of the waves and the howling of the winds and the wild tempest that mocks man's littleness. Without affirming that these lines are the highest poetic expression of the mood, yet it is a feeling worth recording ; it is freedom that he finds exultant in the storm :

Earth-treader, skyborn jester, streaming Storm,
Time-grappling form,
Tempestuously alive,
Round walls of cities, where stale sorrows thrive,
Beat, beat and cry ! Bid forth the captive races
Into the hale, brave world of boundless spaces ;
Shout to them " Freedom ! "

There is an echo of Shelley's passionate *Ode to West Wind* in this. The author writes as a man and does not " dither " over " pelisses " and " pelerines " or " apples dressed as Russians," which latter, as Gilbert wrote of Martin Tupper's verse, " may be very clever, but I do not understand it."

James Mackereth is too prone to over-emphasise his effects. In *Storm Wrack* the poem that gives the title to the volume (John Lane, Bodley Head), he so reiterates the wind's strength and the dreariness of the rain that you feel these are of greater import in the mind of the author than the figures of Bramwell Brontë, who, in the reek of the Black Bull Inn, " points in terror at one still place—Points, rigid as one crucified," and his sister, Emily, who rain-sodden and storm-buffed taps at the door, seeking him.

It is as in a theatre where the stage-managed noise of a storm drowns the words of the actors. Tennyson, with a marvellous economy of words, paints an immediate picture in "And on a sudden, lo! the level lake, and the long glories of the winter moon." The desolate tragedy of the Brontë family and the scene in the Black Bull Inn resembles one of the scenes in *Wuthering Heights*, which is a clever and sure touch.

Human woes and tragedies sweep the board of all artifice and mechanical posings. On the other hand, many poets linger amongst ancient legends, in the land of the eerie, catching the dim sound of the beating of mysterious wings. De la Mare paints life as principally composed of dreams, while W. B. Yeats lives, in poetry, in an enchanted castle, or treads a wood which fays inhabit. *The Wanderings of Usheen*, and his strange doings during so many centuries, may, no doubt, appeal more strongly to the Irish mind, nourished on such legends, than to the English; for after those many hundred years of skimming seas and terrific encounters with monsters, the old man, Usheen, being reproved by the Saint, declares his undefeatable preference for his old comrades, and rejects, as did the heathen king, to join the "blessed" if his ancestors must be in hell. This appears a somewhat banal conclusion to the old man's adventures, just as the stanza that commences so musically, "Joy drowns the twilight in the dew, and fills with stars night's purple cup," falls at the end to "Then mock at Death and Time with glances and wavering arms and wandering dances." This seems but a poor, weak way in which to mock Death; the rigid arms on that tree of Golgotha are immeasurably more potent. In this revised edition of his work (Fisher Unwin) W. B. Yeats has "spent much time altering *Countess Cathleen*," and it may seem an apostasy to say that this play is not very convincing nor is it original. The author gives us, in a note, the source of the story, but he omits to add that the famous lines of the "great black oxen" are also lifted bodily from an ancient version; the entirely simple ballad of *Father Gilligan* touches the heart and the imagination with a power that all the "Niams" and "Maive" and monstrous beings lack; and this is not

because we despise myths. The Greek myths appeal to the mind for the reason that, however strangely they may flower, their roots are deep in human soil. The exquisite story of Psyche awakens an echo from our own experiences; Prometheus and Hercules are linked to men's heroism and suffering. Cuchulain offers no such appeal. As we have said, this may be owing to our unnative interest in the hero, only, so far, in Irish verse his main object seems to lie in fighting everyone, even his own son, and finally "the invulnerable sea." Nevertheless admiration does not always spring from full comprehension. The significance is not manifestly transparent in these lines by Gerald Gould:

One died upon a lonely Cross
 —Lonely enough with two beside.
 Dear, that was your loss and my loss,
 And it was there we died.
 O past the scope of hand's compelling,
 Past the cunning of the eyes,
 Past the noose that thought, rebelling,
 Flings to snare the skies,
 His love reached out to every part,
 And taught his fellows to atone,
 And broke my heart and broke your heart,
 And would not let him die alone.

But they arrest, they call up a sense of beauty and of that inward tragedy that lies in the heart of every poet. In *Beauty and the Pilgrim* (Ernest Benn) the other poems, in addition to that quoted above, are somewhat slight, and that irritating fashion of printing half a poem on one page and leaving a wide space with the other half overleaf, seems merely designed to pad out a book to a reasonable size, lest the purchaser complain of receiving very little for his money. It is an affectation that produces annoyance. When Burne Jones sat, all unheeding the passing of the hours, entranced over Thompson's *Hound of Heaven*, did it at all concern him whether the pages were thick or the spacing wide? All that he, the poet of line, desired, was to get at the heart of what the poet of words said to him; what it was that this pilgrim of truth painted. Let our poets give us marvellous thoughts in a great manner and

we shall not trouble one iota over spacing. At least, we hope not; but herein again in us occurs another touch of resemblance to mechanical creatures—they moved at the bidding of their makers, and the general public is much too inclined to think at the command of a publisher or reviewer. What can we say when a book comes into our hands with this dictum on the cover? (you may ignore a “foreword,” but you cannot escape a note on the cover.) “Princess Bibesco, who is already known to the discriminating public” (mark the trap in that “discriminating”) “for her poetry . . . achieves a more penetrating felicity in this volume.” (Whose felicity? Hers or her readers?)—“her charm, her intuition, all are blended to form an intriguing series of lyrics of love and life.” What remains but to put the finger to the lips and own to “discrimination” and “felicity.” What a black-hearted fellow you must be if you venture to suggest that love is certainly all over the pages, but not life, for life is more than love of youthful beings with eyes resembling delphiniums, and voice with “golden shadows” (what exactly does that mean?), and you would be accused of wearing “cap and bells,” if you joyously demanded to know how any mortal being contrives to leave a smile upon the window pane? These are the lines, “The dusty windings of a road in Spain, a smile you left upon the window pane.” Could this, we thought, have been a misprint, and should it have run “a smile you left upon the widow’s pain”? This is not solely to raise a laugh, but because no wise man breaks a butterfly upon a wheel. Solemnity is out of place when you are watching the gambols of a child at play. You do not capture a glow-worm and gravely demand of it whether it is aware of the profundity of human life. Such a question can only be addressed to the giants who remove mountains. Nevertheless it is certain that many persons will accept as gospel the assertions on the cover of *Poems*, by Princess Bibesco (Ernest Benn), and will prate of her “charm” and “intuition.” We would not deny some measure of charm, but we would have preferred to discover it for ourselves.

ARTHUR HOOD.

THE FERVENT NOTE IN NEW POETRY

MR. WILSON MACDONALD, a Canadian poet, gives the keynote to his verse in his title poem *Out of the Wilderness* (Charles Scribner's Sons), with its Whitman flavour :

I, a vagabond gipsy, lover forever of freedom,
Come to you who are arrogant, proud and fevered with civilisation—
Come with a tonic of sunlight, bottled in wild, careless acres,
To cure you with secrets as old as the breathing of men ;
Come with a chaos of wild flowers, grouped in a lovely disorder,
To shame all your gardens of maddening, cloying perfection.

For I am the herald of new things in a new land.

Later he says : "All that I love is in my song. . ." and his singing is charged with strength and beauty, yet made gentle by a great wistfulness. The poems are rich in descriptive phrases, such as :

Here the white poplars boil
Above the moon fires kindled in a pool . . .

No line is on the canvas here outrolled
Save one frail touch of amber on the sky,
Spilled by the yellow moon in her slow flight.
A slim, black shape creeps up the sea,
And oar-locks gulp like living things,
And birds come winging over me
With day's last effort in their wings.

Upon his shoulders lies the rain
Like a well-fitting cloak.

There are stories as well as songs, and "The Shoe Cobbler in Heaven" is a particularly whimsical one. The cobbler is ashamed of his toil-worn fingers and is miserable in Heaven until the Carpenter shows him His own hands, "calloused from plane and saw," after which he stands

Erect and unafraid . . .
Crying to the angels in the banquet hall :
"His were the plane and saw ; mine were the leather and awl."

In the last section of this volume, "The Book of the Rebel," there is some bitterness, and yet the writer pleads more than rails against

the hollowness of civilisation and the wrongs done to man by fellow man. There is conviction in his defence of Paul Dupris, who

. . . had not gone to fight in this world woe
Because of words One said
By Galilee, two thousand years ago,

and courage in his "Last Portage" and in the poem written on Niagara River. I quote from both of these :

The youngest thing in a youthful world
Is a young soul in an old heart ;
Full statured at the ending ;

As the stars go out so let me go
With a quick leap and a clear light
And a joyous understanding . . .

Niagara ! I have run a course like thine.
Like thee I've marched to beauty through great throes.
Like thee I lost the stars, and doubtings rose
About the slender moon's nocturnal sign.
Yet I went forward when my doubt was strong,
And never ceased my song,
But took with joy the valiant leap of life
And gained the peace that cometh after strife ;

And soon I'll wear like thee the sunset's rose
And then, like thee, go smiling to my goal,
With all my stars of faith alight again
To prove I have not passed this way in vain.

There is an echo of "The Book of the Rebel" in *The Vandal*, by A. E. S. Riddle (Erskine MacDonald, 1s. 6d.), an epic on the causes and the "devilish character" of war. A deliberate classicism shapes the structure of the poem, for the soliloquy of Lucifer, in the character of Deceit, and his subsequent addresses to God and to Man are interspersed by choruses and refrains after the Greek dramatic manner. The blank verse of the dialogue, though direct and sincere, does not attain to the dignity one expects from such a setting. What is probably an unconscious modernism gives to it a touch of colloquialism that robs the poem of much of its convincing power ; yet one cannot fail to notice all the way through

a consistent striving after truth and beauty that is chiefly realised in the rhymed choruses. The Almighty's final words exemplify both the strength and weakness of the verse :

" But, Satan, have you ever thought of this
In all the million moments of sad time ?
That you are but the ghoulish soul of death,
In whom right from the beginning has been branded
The essence of destruction and of loss,
Of death-laden abuse, and more than this,
Not because I have willed it, but because
I am and you have always been I was.

The Final Song ends on a note of complete triumph :

Chorus :

Humanity from the Creation unwitting flows down from above,
Then out of its sin and its sorrow
God brings forth His infinite love,
For the Lord is Lord of Right . . . Alleluia !

Cantores :

Then, comfort ye, folk of all nations, who worshipped gods
heedless of ruth,

Decani :

Since out of our bloodshed and anguish
Christ's mercy has brought forth His truth.

Chorus :

For the Lord is Lord of Light . . . Alleluia !

Cantores :

Rejoice, O ye daughters of travail, break forth into song, sons
of men.

Decani :

Since out of our conflict and struggle
God brings forth our Beauty again.

Chorus :

For the Lord is Lord of Might . . . Alleluia !

The Vandal is poetry with a mission. Mr. Riddle's case could not be put so effectively in prose. What he has to say is full of

thought and reason and has a sociological and political appeal and should provide a theme for preachers and orators.

The poems in *By Rochford Town*, by Sir Alfred Temple, F.S. (John Murray, 7s. 6d.), are quietly retrospective and as subdued in tone as the author's beautiful illustrations. In fact the verse seems to be the dependent factor. It is tinged with sadness and strangely soothing. This is the pen picture of the mill :

And yonder is the mill,
Aloof from all the village talk,
The little group of buildings still
Stand as a landmark as you walk.

There the broad river's flow
Moves gently 'gainst the narrow quay,
And brown-sailed barges come and go
With patient regularity.

One wishes that the punctuation had been as carefully considered, in many places, as the type and general appearance of the book.

A new translation is always interesting (*The Bacchanals of Euripides*, by Margaret Kinmont Tennant, Methuen, 3s. 6d.), for one is able to bring a sense of comparison to influence judgment, and more especially when the translation emerges from that test, as does this one, with favour. The translator has made a study of all adaptable metres and handles the one she has chosen, the heroic line, excellently well, as may be judged from the following passage describing the moment of Pentheus's betrayal :

He took a pine-tree by the skiey crest,
And bent it down and down to dusty earth,
Arching it like a bow, or pictured wheel
Traced by a carpenter. No hand of man
Could bend the giant of the mountains. There
He set my master in the pine branches,
And let the trunk recoil into the air,
But slowly, careful lest his man be thrown,
And straight and stark it rose into the stark sky,
And Pentheus rode aloft.

She has also added a valuable dissertation upon Quantity and Accent and a Metrical Appendix.

Mrs. Henry Jenner, in her *Songs of the Stars and the Sea* (Erskine

MacDonald, 3s. 6d.), handles many metres and rhyming patterns with facility—too great a facility perhaps, for her style is often subservient to their needs and, thereby, forced. This is true of the songs of sea and stars and of Cornwall, but an entirely different impression is left by the “Five First Things” (of the Infant Jesus), which are charming in their simplicity. These lines are from “The First Look” :

In Heaven Thou dost hear the laughter of the stars,
As they are singing round the eternal Throne ;
On Earth Thou hearest but the chains upon the bars,
The champing of the cattle on the stone.

Thou camest to bestow and not to gather gain,
Yet Thou didst garner somewhat of this Earth.
No mother hadst Thou in Thy Heaven nor any pain,
Her heritage Thou gainedst in Thy birth.

and these from “The First Step” :

Thy Feet have come from my breast ;
In my clinging hand they lie.
How can I set them to rest
On the earth's impurity ?

Oh, how shall I let Thee go ?
For the earth will surely quake
When I set Thee on her . . . so,
On the world which Thou didst make.

An unexpected nobility is the outstanding quality of Edgar Lee Masters' Dramatic Poem, *Lee* (Macmillan). He stages Lee's part in the civil war of early America and creates, for commentators, the shadowy figures of Ormund and Arimanius. Robert Lee is a manly figure discovered first in prayer before his decision is made. . . . He prays . . .

“ My fear is only if I err,
And work against His plan, and be a stumbling
To his predestined ordering of the world ;
And a falsehood in its story, and a note
That mars its harmony.”

After the challenge of the Republic and the answers of the loyal and

defiant States, the action of the drama leaps over Lee's early successes and centres upon the fatal battle of Gettysburg. The contest is watched by Ormund and Arimanius, from the moment of assault by Lee's "lean young victors who have never known defeat," with their "lettered hearts and wise," to the bitter hour of defeat :

Grief for him who knows the issue, walks away lest he see
How they come not back who pressed where he pointed them to go.
Arms around his horse's neck, eyes averted, lingers Lee,
Taking all the fault for his, and the burden of the woe.

Ormund and Arimanius are not the only commentators upon the war with its causes and effects. The Mountaineer who tends one of Lee's deserters contrasts the victorious North with the shattered South :

. . . you slept and dreamed,
And weakened in your riches, softly gained.
But we, the North, the North-west, bound to hack
And blast and dig for turnpikes and canals,
Grew mighty with our labors . . .
Slaves fed your soldiers, but the reaper fed
Our soldiers, and more richly than your slaves . . .
I am not lettered, but the arm that toils
Makes thought more clear, and the eye more sure
To see and weigh.

When the war is ended Lee travels to Lexington to take up the presidency of the University, unburdening his heart to his horse, "Traveler," as he goes. . .

"And so great loneliness must be my portion,
Companioned only by incessant thoughts . . ."

Yet he concludes with. . .

What happier fate
Were mine, than after war to enter
Here, where his name inspires me
To rebuild . . . till it becomes a shrine
Of Liberty and Peace, and what was never
Done by hate nor force nor war,
Be done by love and service . . .

But Lee's spirit in the end is crushed by the indignities imposed

upon him by the Union. News is brought of his death and the poem ends with a dirge of his students.

In a sub-title to her book, *Genesis* (Heinemann), Dorothy Wellesley calls it an Impression. It is a great deal more than this. It is an outline of the growth of Man, drawn with such deft touches, such suggestive indications, and such brilliant imagery, that one feels as if a whole map of history were spread out before one, and yet there are not more than thirty pages in this remarkable book. The author draws, as it were parallel lines, tracing the development of Man's trails, homes, tales, art, fear, burial rites, myths and shrines, pointing her argument with such significant sentences as :

And Man beheld the track, and with his load,
Careless of thirst, or weariness, or cold,
With naked feet trod out the earth's first road.

Lined his rock home with pictures, knew them good,
And in triumphant mood
Made butting bisons charge across a cave.

Tales of the children : first historians.
Impalpable memories from the past : they come
Riding the years, like cries upon the gales . . .

By these we know him yet ; who has consigned
To human keeping all he gravely made
In ardour and patience for the fine or fair,
In the great loving of a daily trade. . .
Telling of faith and beauty and none know why.

Fear of the darkness fell on Man, he said :
" Bury the wine and the weapons with the dead."

So lies mankind, with feet and eyes that face
Towards the west : a happy hunting place ;
Towards the fabulous garden in the south ;
Alert for the ferry, coin within the mouth ;
Towards his resurrection in the east . . .

Who walks upon the hill ?
Shadowless with the shadowy herds that brush,
Moving, their hoofs and noses in the dew,
Far, close, uncertain, but that breathe and chew,

Deepening the midnight, deepening the hush,
He who is cloven too.

The earth is strewn with shrines : growing they range
Over the world like waves, shifting, they change
To the Cathedrals of the later days,
Whose spires beyond a wash of buttercups
Spurt from the shoulder of a neighbouring field ;

Though she can cover centuries in a few words, yet she can afford to spend a whole stanza here and there to illustrate some small truth. This is not inconsistent with her scheme, however, for this small truth will be found to illumine all that has gone past or is to come. The lines chosen for quotation are not selected because they are unusually vivid but because they particularly illustrate the layers of progress into which the poem is divided. Almost every line in the book could be used to illustrate the writer's style for every one is packed with meaning and rich in symbolism. Geologists may criticise her confusion of periods in this description :

Old with earth's history ; he knew the ease
Of empty shores by the warm early seas . . .
. . . Orpheus of the sea that ran
From Britain to Japan,
And with its tides laid down the London clay ;
When, genial, a lost akaska grew
Broad-blossomed trees, and the magnolia stole
Warm-scented to the Pole.

but few can fail to recognise the beauty and suggestiveness of it.

To write obviously and deliberately in the metre and manner that another has already set the seal of his individuality upon may be an honest form of flattery, but it is not a successful expedient in literature. There is always a sense of comparison in the background of the reader's mind. The legends and incidents told by Baragwanath King in his *Arthur and Others in Cornwall* (Erskine MacDonald) are decidedly amusing and reeled off in the Barham manner, but they naturally lack the inimitable quality of Barham's humour. Some of the denouements fall rather flat, at least to an outsider ; they are probably much richer in association to Cornishmen. One is perhaps more amazed than shocked at any one daring to write a new version of "The Coming of Arthur" in the medium of Ingoldsby. Mr. King apparently intends to treat his subject seriously, but how

can seriousness be achieved by these jingling rhymes and metres ? It would take all the art of Merlin himself to create an atmosphere of enchantment out of :

“ Now gaze at the castle,” cries Merlin, “ awhile,
Thy henchmen with sleep-dusted eyes lie around ;
Through walls thou now seest Igerna’s rare smile,
While her chamber is ringing with twanging harp’s sound.

And now she doth chaff,
Now with handmaid doth laugh ;
She thinks of her lord,
Now fighting with sword ;
Now fighting to flee,
From thy henchmen and thee,”

or from :

’Tis bustle in hall as servitors all,
Of lonely Tintagel are rushing about ;
For loud is the cry from a far-reaching call,
And the rattling of armour and weapons without.

Mr. King evidently feels his lines are too full of lilt and tries to break it down here and there, but he only succeeds in irritating his readers by sudden checks and forced accents—for all the world like a sudden brake applied to a merry-go-round. Let us enjoy his humorous verse, by all means, but not a travesty of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s legendary lore.

In *Nan of Aviemore*, by A. Niven Robertson (Erskine Macdonald), there is considerable merit. This tragedy of the Highlands is told in vigorous if not always convincing words, and with a good deal of lyrical as well as dramatic power. Yet this author has also handicapped himself at the outset by adopting the style of the most widely read narrative poetry of to-day. The description of the shipwreck is one of the best in the book :

Then from the bow there came a hollow shout,
“ Look out ahead ; for God’s sake, go dead slow ;
There’s ice ahead ! ” A cry from the “ look out.”
“ Too late ! ” the “ old man ” cried, “ God damn the floe.”

His voice was drowned within a thunder clap
Of bursting rivets and of crashing plates,
The gush of waters roaring through a gap
Like mighty rivers that have burst their gates.

Then in the silence of soft falling snow
 The white ship shuddered like a silver knight
 Whose plumes, once soaring, totter at the blow
 Of icy monsters hidden in the night.

* * * *

The great ship rose stern upwards in the foam,
 And hundreds swept into the frozen sea,
 While, blue above it all, the mighty dome,
 The iceberg floated, grim, majestic, free.

A mere reading is hardly a sufficient test of the *Canadian Plays*, edited by Vincent Massey (Macmillan) and produced in Hart House Theatre, Toronto. That they are crisp in dialogue, and intended chiefly as character studies, is easily recognisable, but the climax is often so slight that the success of the play depends very largely upon the ability of the actors who perform them. There is a modern tendency towards morbid realism in art, and certainly these Canadian writers are "selective" after this fashion, for nearly every character is revealed in his most unpleasing qualities, unrelieved by those others that must be included (in varying proportion) in his human total. The Jewish wedding groups in H. Borsook's "Three Weddings of a Hunchback," in particular, are drawn with a pen that eliminates almost every trace of likeableness from their composition. Even the pathos of the hunchback daughter's position and the tenderness in her father's character are blotted out by the vulgarity and egoism of the rest of her tribe. Having sacrificed this note of pathos, the play becomes unconvincing. The other plays, because of their insistence upon the dominant feature of unendurable qualities, fail to satisfy. Yet, in spite of this, they are undeniably interesting and sometimes impressive; especially is this so in "The Translation of John Snaith," by Britton Cooke, where a poignant and beautiful note is allowed to dominate over the undercurrent of discord.

E. D. B.

THE RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE OF INDIAN POETRY.

Sir Denison Ross, in the Preface to the Bodley Head's edition of the *Light of Asia*, deplors the fact that this extraordinary effort of Buddhistic biography on the part of an Englishman, combined with an interpretation of Buddhistic teachings, is insufficiently appreciated in modern times. This is indeed strange in a period when Buddhism is undoubtedly affecting both America and Europe.

As yet, perhaps, there is but a vague realisation or acceptance of the fact that (to quote Sir Denison) "five centuries before the birth of Jesus Christ a man had preached all the essential virtues of Christianity." The *Light of Asia* has run into sixty editions in England and eighty in America. It has been filmed by a company of all-Indian actors; a perfect masterpiece. It has been described by a friend of the writer's as her second Bible. It may have its imperfections as a poem, but its forcefulness is undeniable, and the illustrations by Mr. Hamzeh Carr have the power to fascinate the most apathetic of Occidentals.

As with Buddhism so with the Sikh religion—both are little known in the West. "He came (Guru Nanak) like a song of Heaven." This is the opening line of Puran Singhs's *Book of the Ten Masters* (Selwyn and Blount). There lies within these pages a universality of thought that is as refreshing as rain to a thirsty flower.

"Thou art the Hindu, the Moslem, the Turk
and the Feringhi; Thou art the Persian,
the Sanskritian, the Arabian;.....

Thou art man, woman, child and God!"

Nanak had wheat farms at Kartarpur, where he worked with his people, but most of his sowing was done in instilling into the hearts of man the love of a Universal God. "He came like a Song of Heaven" and he left the earth amid a chorus of song. Nanak was followed by Angad, the children's *guru*, who performed miracles and gave the people literature and an alphabet. The third *guru*, old Amardas, attained *guruship* as a reward of faithful service, and his daughter married Ramdas, the fourth *guru*.

Akbar, the Moghul emperor, gave a few villages to Amardas from which grew the Sikh stronghold of *Amrita-sar* (Amritsar), which means Lake of Immortality. This city or shrine was completed by *Guru Arjun Dev*, who was responsible for the *Guru Grantha* (the Sikh Bible). *Har Gobind*, the sixth *guru*, was born through prayer and died in torture. He became the avenging figure of a just cause, tempered by the pathos of a *sati*-spirit, and lived in the hearts of his disciples. *Har Rai* was a conscientious disciplinarian, a quiet man. *Har Krishan*, his son, was soaked in the mysticism of divinity. *Tegh Bahadur*'s overwhelming sympathy led him into a renunciatory attitude of mind. *Gobind Rai*, the tenth and last *guru*, was the essence of joy and enthusiasm. He was the disciple of laughter and wit, and in turn infused this spirit into his disciples.

It was he who originated the addition of the word "*singh*" (lion) to the name of every Sikh. "Arms were thenceforth the symbol of a disciple's fervour of soul." Fearless as lions, true as their swords of steel, servants of the Master, *that* was the new type of Sikh which was born from the mentality of Gobind . . . brothers all. This is but a hasty résumé of, perhaps, the best book Puran Singh has written. Sikhism is a superb religion born of toleration, of militarism, that is tempered with symbolic use of God's own weapon—universal love. "*Sri wah Guru Ji Ka Khalsa!*"

The Swami Sriyananda Acharya is an Indian living in Norway. Scandinavia sent its people through Russia via Persia into India, and India, in consequence, claims kinship with Scandinavia. So we get, in Acharya's latest poems (*Arctic Swallows*) a curious engraftment of Eastern thought upon the stems of Western plants. "Dear," he says, "these are the songs of swallows born beneath the eaves of our ancestral temple, called *Mantra Gayatri*, in the *Veda*-land, who year by year visit me, bringing the message of wisdom and the adoration of the One from the land of my birth to my arctic math in the land of the Midnight Sun." Sometimes he reaches almost towards a Japanese condensation of thought, and again has an optimism born of spiritual depths. "All things hide in darkness to bring all things to light."

He utilises Eastern symbolism for the expression of ideas that have a kinship with Western mentality, and a pacific spirit of compassion emanates from the bulk of his work. "Who can die?" sing the swans. We have Arctic pictures identified with Brahmanic truths, Nirvana reached through a pine-bordered grass-path. It is all very strange, comforting to the student of comparative philosophy and religion, somewhat remote, maybe, to the man-in-the-street. Acharya's virginal, visionary, Nirvanic love "knows no truth but faith, she knows no food but service, she knows no work but prayer."

GWENDOLINE GOODWIN.

* * *

Messrs. Elkin Mathews and Marrot, Ltd., the publishers who were responsible for the Vigo Cabinet Series which introduced Masefield, Newbolt and L. Binyon, have moved to Bloomsbury Street. In continuing their publication of new poetry of fine quality they point out that "In these days when poetry has so much to contend with, only that work stands any chance of success which, besides specific literary merit, possesses significance as giving expression to the poetical outlook of to-day. It has been the aim of the publishers to discover such work, and to give the writers an opportunity of making themselves heard."

AMERICAN EDITORIAL NOTES:

EDWIN MARKHAM: HIS FAME AND ITS DEVELOPMENT: HIS GREAT LINCOLN POEM: DR. STICKNEY GRANT: A NEW 100 DOLLAR CONTEST.

THROUGH the convolutions of time and the evolution of life's expression on our planet, the scientist has taught us to think in terms of Ages, thus—the Stone Age, the Iron Age, the Bronze Age, the Coal Age, the Oil Age, the Electric Age, the Aerial Age, and for purposes of identification the mind of the scholar classifies the majestic procession of minds through the years in terms of Ages, as the Age of Solomon, of Homer, of Dante, of Chaucer, of Shakespeare, and across the water, we say, in Emerson's day, in Whitman's day. And now, those who are privileged to be here, speak of Markham's day.

Edwin Markham uncovers to an ever occupied and often weary world new fountains of spiritual illumination and beauty. His is the great voice of an aspiring people, radiant, reverent, honourable, never missing even an echo of beauty. He touches the sublime again and again.

Our world is bearing testimony to this fact. *The Man With the Hoe* has been translated into 40 tongues. Where I live, at the Park Lane, and occasionally have the honour of Mr. and Mrs. Markham's company, there is not a server in that great building who has not read this epoch-making poem. It has gone beyond the confines of the literati into the heart and understanding of humanity. In the Greek days it is probable that the utterances of Homer did not reach the masses, but in the whirligig of time, to be part of the Poet-Great to-day, there must be present potentiality. It is the divine exaction of a more advanced period.

All readers of THE POETRY REVIEW will remember we awarded to Edwin Markham the Poe Contest Prize for his splendid poem *Our Israfael*, and will want to have the following good news, taken from Mr. Wise's announcement of his forthcoming anthology published by Wise and Co., 50 West 47th, N.Y., and called *The Book of Poetry*.

"This is the story of the man who wrote America's greatest poem.

"He has given sixty years to poetry. He is now in his seventy-fifth year. His place as a poet is secure. If he had never written anything but *The Ballad of the Gallows-Bird*—on which he worked nine years—or *Lincoln*, *The Man of the People*, or *The Man With the Hoe*, he would have won literary immortality.

"As Vice-President Marshall said on one occasion: 'We who are standing here will pass into oblivion—we and all our works will

vanish; but the name of Edwin Markham will echo down the centuries.'

"From his earliest youth, Markham's life has been dedicated to poetry. When he was a small boy, herding cattle on the Suisun Hills of California, he set his heart on the possession of Shakespeare, Byron, Tennyson and Tom Moore. He appealed to his mother, herself a poet of considerable distinction, but she was very poor—so poor that she could not gratify the taste for poetry with which she had endowed her son.

"Undaunted, this youth of fourteen plowed twenty acres of ground at one dollar an acre to earn the money with which to buy his first books of poetry. Only the man who has followed the plow from sun-up to sun-down, day after day for weeks at a time, can realize what longing must have led the boy to spend those twenty dollars for poetry! The four great English poets became the foundation of the library that now fills his Staten Island home.

"The poetry of the last half century he read as it was published, choosing the best work of 300 or more modern poets as it came from their inspired pens. These new masterpieces round out his great collection, which begins with the earliest poets of Greece, Judea, and Rome, and comes down through the centuries to the present day. And it includes many poets whose fame is secure although they wrote perhaps only one perfect poem."

We have the privilege of printing his *Lincoln, The Man of the People*. (This revised version was chosen out of 250 Lincoln poems by the committee headed by Chief Justice Taft, to be read at the dedication of the great Lincoln Memorial erected by the government in Washington, D.C., in 1922. There were 100,000 listeners on the ground and 2,000,000 over the Radio. President Harding delivered the address.)

When the Norn Mother saw the Whirlwind Hour
Greathening and darkening as it hurried on,
She left the Heaven of Heroes and came down
To make a man to meet the mortal need.
She took the tried clay of the common road—
Clay warm yet with the genial heat of Earth,
Dasht through it all a strain of prophecy,
Tempered the heap with thrill of human tears
Then mixt a laughter with the serious stuff.
Into the shape she breathed a flame to light
That tender, tragic, ever-changing face;
And laid on him a sense of the Mystic Powers,

Moving—all husht—behind the mortal veil.
Here was a man to hold against the world,
A man to match the mountains and the sea.

The color of the ground was in him, the red earth,
The smack and tang of elemental things :
The rectitude and patience of the cliff,
The goodwill of the rain that loves all leaves,
The friendly welcome of the wayside well,
The courage of the bird that dares the sea,
The gladness of the wind that shakes the corn,
The pity of the snow that hides all scars,
The secrecy of streams that make their way
Under the mountain to the rifted rock,
The tolerance and equity of light
That gives as freely to the shrinking flower
As to the great oak flaring to the wind—
To the grave's low hill as to the Matterhorn
That shoulders out the sky. Sprung from the West,
He drank the valorous youth of a new world.
The strength of virgin forests braced his mind,
The hush of spacious prairies stilled his soul.
His words were oaks in acorns ; and his thoughts
Were roots that firmly gript the granite truth.

Up from log cabin to the Capitol,
One fire was on his spirit, one resolve—
To send the keen axe to the root of wrong,
Clearing a free way for the feet of God,
The eyes of conscience testing every stroke,
To make his deed the measure of a man.
He built the rail-pile as he built the State,
Pouring his splendid strength through every blow :
The grip that swung the axe in Illinois
Was on the pen that set a people free.

So came the Captain with the mighty heart ;
And when the judgment thunders split the house,
Wrenching the rafters from their ancient rest,
He held the ridgepole up, and spikt again
The rafters of the Home. He held his place—
Held the long purpose like a growing tree—
Held on through blame and faltered not at praise—

THE POETRY REVIEW

Held on in calm rough-hewn sublimity.
 And when he fell in whirlwind, he went down
 As when a lordly cedar, green with boughs,
 Goes down with a great shout upon the hills,
 And leaves a lonesome place against the sky.

* * *

On the scope and making of his Anthology Mr. Markham has written me as follows: "West New Brighton, N.Y.

"My dear Alice Hunt Bartlett,—

"Replying to your request for a word concerning *The Book of Poetry*—my ten-volume anthology—let me say that I was prevailed upon to compile these many poems because I wished to have them with most of the poor poems winnowed out. There are many useful anthologies, all containing some of the crowned poems of the English race; but they also contain many poems which seem to me to be wooden and well-nigh worthless. A few of these may have historic interest, but this fact should not cause them to be included except in perhaps two or three cases.

"I am also representing minor poets with only one or two poems, while I represent the major poets—Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Shelley, Keats, Swinburne, Tennyson, Browning, and the rest—with copious selections. In this way I am cramming with the volumes a vast amount of the glorious poetic gold neglected by many other collections.

"Besides this, I am—for the sake of young students—adding a large number of headnotes to the major poets included, headnotes giving biographic and critical comment. Many individual poems also carry a note to help the young reader. Mine is not a bare collection of poems.

"Let me say, finally, that the volumes are small pocket volumes. A woman can slip one easily into her handbag. I am so pleased with the book and convenience of these small volumes that I have decided to use three volumes of this size to contain my *Collected Poems*, which are to appear early in 1928.—Ever yours to command, EDWIN MARKHAM."

* * *

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW PREMIUM OFFER

Mrs. Alice Hunt Bartlett offers a prize of \$100 for the best poem, not exceeding 100 lines, on *The Leader*, in memory of Dr. Percy Stickney Grant.

MSS. must reach Mrs. Bartlett, 299 Park Avenue, New York, by November 1st, 1927. The poems in this contest should deal with

any leader of any time and any clime. By leaders are meant men possessing the quality of leadership.

Adopting the optimism of Cicero when he said, "All great men are inspired," and bearing in mind Demosthenes' warning that "Everything great is not always good, but all good things are great," and the truism that "A great man is the man who does a thing for the first time," we arrive at the conclusion that "A great man is he who does a good thing for the first time."

Greatness comes in many forms; physical greatness, moral greatness, and intellectual greatness lead. Different ages afford different opportunities for greatness and men rise to leadership. The history of art, science, politics, religion abound with the names of great leaders. The poems may deal with any leader or any aspect of this compelling subject.

The death of Percy Stickney Grant on February 13th of this year at Bedford, his summer home, removed from our American life a great force, for 30 years pastor of the Church of the Ascension, 10th Street and 5th Avenue, N.Y. (It will be recalled that in this American Section we reviewed Dr. Grant's last book of poems.)

At the historic old church, St. Mark's, in the Bowery, on February 27th, a service of homage to Percy Stickney Grant was held. The speakers of that occasion numbered among them clergymen, editors, and poets, including Edwin Markham, who delivered a poem written for the occasion, and the writer of this tribute.

As the years go on and this constantly changing panorama of life brings to us ever new reactions and conclusions, there grows a deeper recognition and understanding of what such a man as Dr. Grant does for us all . . . in his example of courage as a Standard Bearer, his loyalty to the truth that was in him . . . and his undying belief in and search for—the Best! A brave and chivalrous leader, a force for good in our nation and in our times! Familiar to some of those present was Dr. Grant's very characteristic Christmas greeting in 1915 to his many friends.

"The measure of a man is a day. His strength for labour, his ability to keep awake, his need of nourishment, are all planned on a 24 hour schedule.

"A man's life is worth little more in the sight of God than its testimony to what it sees of truth. Its ease or poverty, its success or failure are mere laboratory arrangements for observation and experiment.

"Why should I hesitate to say what I know that someone in the future will proclaim."

Quoting further, from his collection of poems called *The Fifth Avenue Parade*, we find the following exalted definition of Home :—

“What’s home, except the happiness
Of knowing that your deeds will bless ?
A trench—a prison—where’er you roam
In God’s behalf is home.”

Dr. Holmes expressed in the following glowing terms his sense of loss. “Dr. Grant was the bravest and biggest leader of our time, this generation has seen nothing bolder than his organization of the public forum at the Church of the Ascension. Into the pomp and ceremony of the Episcopal Church he brought the man of the street, the labour leader, the radical, the red, and bade him speak his message. This was a magnificent attempt to restore the church to the people, to get back something of the simplicity and democracy that were in Christ. Dr. Grant believed in the common man, just as Lincoln did. Men may build cathedrals and consecrate bishops and write prayer books to the end of time but these things are dust as compared with one brave man !” His early death, brought about undoubtedly by the exactions of his recognition of responsibility to his fellow man, calls to mind the ringing lines of Ben Johnson :—“Who falls for love of God shall rise a star.”

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT.

THE AMERICAN POET OF THE MONTH.

Streets in the Moon, by Archibald MacLeish (Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston), is of the unique inspiration that comes to a man who feels bounded by his place in space and whose *leit motif* seems to be “wait.” He writes in both whimsical and earnest vein, of where he entered—if so I may interpret the *Tea Party* :—

“So there they sat, the five
Comfortable women around the kettle
Sipping their tea while the cheerful metal
Shone in the sun.—With claws, said she,
And dipped her bread in her cup of tea.

* * *

Circling a wood fire, sit the five
Deep in a forest. Thin clouds drive
Dragging across the moon. An oak
Screams in the wind. The wet wood smoke
Blinds. And behind in the rustling dark
Night birds scream terror, baboons bark

and where tending :

He writes many a poem in contrapuntal fashion. *Nocturne* and *Memorial Rain* blend various voices interplaying, each individually true and toning a part that is rare harmony and lie, in the final effect.

Mr. MacLeish is seriously regardful (in company with a hundred other modern poets) of what an abandoned farm, old graves or even the spell of a characterful room can suggest to him. This is all in a sophisticated vocabulary, which, perhaps, distinguishes his reactions from the aforementioned hundred others. But, how refreshing from its setting of such rehandled subject-matter comes the precious moment of *Eleven*! Here, altered tone, altered medium, everything back within himself to pick up something he must have left behind before he achieved *L'An Trentiesme de Mon Age*!

After *Ars Poetica*, in which he has sounded his thought of what is natural to a real poem, one is tempted to lay aside his book and let remember the poem which most was

As the flight of birds."

For me, *Selene Afterwards* hung separated in that finer air, *Selene Afterwards* which had moved line by line with a vehemence and a starkness of withering challenge, into a cast of kindliness and pleasant spaces, much as rigid scenery yields to sun strength.

You lovers, through that water where there swing
Night shadows of the world. Look deep, deep
Drown

Your eyes in deepness. Look ! There lies the thing
That made you love, that maddened you ! Oh, sing,
Sing in the fields, you lovers. The low moon
Moves in the elms. It will be summer soon . . .”

This shows a nice fineness of cadence, an Anglo-Saxon vocabulary (most perfectly displayed in Millay's *The King's Henchman*) and a lay of syllables, all his own. For he employs two beats of a measure in this poem when he uses "cold," "slow" or "deep," that in dwelling upon those words, a fullness of meaning is enhanced by the weight of the pause. In this as in most of the others, his technique is natural to his subject-matter, and strictly his own affair. H. H. F.

THE POETS' FELLOWSHIP:

THE PREMIUM EDITOR'S REPORT

ALTHOUGH a number of excellent poems have been sent in this month, there is one poem of outstanding quality, and we have no hesitation in awarding the premium to Julia Boynton Green (California) for *After an Earthquake*. This "soliloquy of a survivor," as she calls it in a sub-title, is no panic-fraught effusion, but a calm retrospection that is yet unmistakably seared by the marks of terrible experience. The unforced rhymes and the straightforward diction that is rich in imagery add to the convincing power of the poem.

While commending many of the other competitors for work that shows individuality of outlook and considerable technical ability, we would like to ask nearly every one to pay greater attention to an important detail of their composition—namely, punctuation. Many a good poem is weakened or marred by neglected or faulty punctuation. In some instances the sense of whole verses is left entirely to the wit of the reader to disentangle. It is true that the laws of punctuation are flexible, but there must be consistency shown in whatever system is adopted; and there are certain rules, such as the insertion of commas to mark off the nominative of address and certain parenthetical clauses, that cannot be ignored. We also notice a frequent impartiality in the use of the vocative *O* and the exclamatory *Oh!* These may sound like minor points to cavil at, but perfection in these matters is within the reach of all who endeavour to express themselves in the terms of poetry. May we also remind writers that it is necessary to put the full name of the author upon every sheet that contains a poem. Poems selected for a second or third reading are naturally detached from covering letter and are liable to become confused unless this rule be kept.

Specially commended (with book acknowledgments) are D. F. Radford, London, W.2, for *Hands and Brain*; Helena Derezinska, Strasburg (*The Five White Horses*); Nancy Pollock, Glasgow (*After Change*); Margot K. Mackillop Brown, Southampton (*Poet's Song*); Albert E. Dewey, Wandsworth, S.W.18 (*Rook's Pawn*); and Vera I. Arlett, Worthing (*Written in Winter*).

Highly commended are Julia B. Green, for *The Dreamer*; Judith B. Tweedale (*Corfe Castle*); Walter K. Lewis (*The Call of Spring*); Wm. W. Addison (*Poems of Robert Bridge*); Albert E. Dewey (*Grass*); "G. E." (*Remorse*); John W. Nance (*Envoi*); D. Radford (*A Tragedy, An Old Story, and After the Funeral*); Florence Overton (*Midsummer Night*); Helena Derezinska (*The Resurrection of God*); L. M. Brown (*White Road, White Moon*); and we have pleasure in

commending Thos. B. Crawford, T. E. Casson, Marie Davidson, E. Joyce Harrison, Frederick Kemp, Ethel Holdsworth, John Cook, G. E. Merrick, Marguerite Pollard, "H. R.," Julia P. Dabney, Editha Melbourne, "D. P. J.," "Philomel," and M. Anderson.

* * *

We cannot do more than mention a few of the volumes from the pile of "fellowship books" accumulated during several months. The cultured *Poems* of Lorna de Lucchi (Blackwell) deserve a longer notice. They are full of colourful delight, whether dealing with Malvern or Ravenna or with the various seasons in England and Italy. Everywhere the writer perceives beauty and is able to express it, and has the still rarer gift of being able to penetrate to the heart of things. *There is Sorrow on the Sea*, by Henry Martin (Claude Stacey), contains a number of Eastern poems which display keen observation and deft characterisation. A series of concentrated sonnets are so obviously sonnets in form and character that they do not need to be distinctly described as such, their own individual titles should suffice. Here, again, Mr. Martin shows himself to be master of verse. An apt term, "Time's rag and bone man," is applied to the antiquary, and he, in turn, retorts with glowing sentences about the "gates of glamourie" and "Punic triremes thrashing home." Very musical and graceful are the *Songs of the Passionate Spring*, by P. F. Croshaw, and John Willwyn's vigorous *Poems of the Welsh Border* (Owen, Oswestry), with their patriotic fervour and clever handling of metres, raise the expectation of a wider range of localised ballads. Much more restrained in expression and speech are the *Poems* by Henry Lancelot Dixon, M.A. He is particularly happy in his distinctive Wiltshire pieces and his tributary sonnets. Curious interest is attached to the neatly turned quatrains from *Enchiridion* of Aurelius Prudentius Clemens.

* * *

The *Poems for Boys and Girls*, by Arthur Vine Hall (Longmans, Green and Co., 2s.), are a delightful selection from his "Poems of a South African," though it is probable that "grown-ups" will be the greater appreciators of the philosophy of the little girl who loved her old doll :

He said
 . . . dollies never have hair that grows . . .
 I see very well how little he knows !
 My Daddy is baldy too,
 And has no red cappie like you.

—and of the small boy who lost one of his three red apples :

"One was for Mummy ; one for me ;
 And for my Daddy one."
 Then, amid tears, and chokingly,
 "Poor Daddy . . . now has none !"

One feels convinced, from the sureness of touch manifest in these little poems, that the incidents are crowded with rich associations to the writer.

* * *

The *Little Gem Poetry Books* (Bell), edited by R. K. and M. I. R. Polkinghorne, are delightful anthologies of verse for young folk, and not to be despised by their elders. The print, so important and so often neglected an item in children's books, is large and clear. Old and new writers jostle one another on the pages with engaging impartiality, and the books are modern in their freedom from the mawkishness that used to "put off" so many children, where poetry was concerned.

* * *

The inclusion of *The Poems and Prophecies of William Blake* in Everyman's Library has an immediate, topical appeal. It is ready in time for many new readers to be prepared for this year's Centenary. This remarkably full collection of Blake's work includes a number of facsimile title pages and drawings and a useful bibliography, as well as a sensible and valuable introduction by Mr. Max Plowman, who has published, also through Messrs. Dent and Sons, a more extensive introduction to the study of Blake (4s. 6d. net), in which he answers many of the strange problems that bewilder the general reader of the visionary poet in a series of original and appreciative essays on Blake's poetry, wherein the author has attempted to follow Blake's own advice :

"I give you the end of a golden string,
 Only wind it into a ball,
 It will lead you in at Heaven's gate
 Built in Jerusalem's wall."

* * *

For particulars of the regular Premium offer see the January issue of THE POETRY REVIEW.

* * *

Readers who receive any invitations or other communications from the "Poetry Lovers' Fellowship," or any similar organisation, are requested to send them on to the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

THE INFLUENCE OF ALFRED OLLIVANT.

MR. ALFRED OLLIVANT was better known as a novelist—his epic tale of a dog, *Owd Bob*, has become a classic already—but he was known to some of us many years ago as a writer of verse, and he left behind him some unpublished poems. Perhaps his most characteristic poem is *I Believe in England*, in *Country Life* Christmas number, 1919, which reveals the glowing soul of a modern Bayard. We wish that at his death last January these noble lines, so essential to-day, had been widely quoted. They make us wish to know more of the man who wrote them. A beautiful tribute to his genius for living was paid in *The Times* by Mr. Barclay Baron, who, after reminding us that this soldierly son of a family of soldiers, after a brilliant beginning in the Army, was permanently crippled by a riding accident when twenty, records how years later he crept back to health and found shy occupation in the streets and tenements and boys' clubs of Bermondsey about 1912. He volunteered for war service and instead found himself in a sanatorium in Switzerland.

In 1919 Alfred Ollivant was ordered abroad again for his health and began his journey to Switzerland on a litter, a very sick man. He arrived in Paris exhausted, and while lying there unable to move, he expressed in these lines his mind, which had been much exercised by the unrest at home following the war :—

I believe in England
I believe
In that rough race amid the Northern Seas
So gloriously turbulent, yet staid
At heart as any maid.

Masterful men, grim women, stubborn babes,
They strove among themselves like warring waves
Till the drum tapped.
Then all like one
Fell into line, their faces to the East,
And made of their lean bodies one flint wall
That stemmed the deluge of barbarians
Who sought to swamp the world.

For years they stood,
Masterful men, grim women, stubborn babes,
Linked hand in hand, one undulating line,
That surged to the reiterated shock
But never broke.

Cracking their Cockney jokes they stood and died
 By hundred-thousands, faces to the storm,
 And went on dying till the flood was stayed.
 Then they turned home, a twinkle in their eyes,
 Masterful men, grim women, stubborn babes,
 Insurgent as the Seas that they had purged,
 Established as the Earth that they had saved,
 And fell upon each other with a roar.

O race of Emperors, the Lords of Death
 And Conquerors of Satan in his pride,
 The White-maned riot of your sea-wolf ways,
 Tumultuous as the Atlantic on your Shores
 Gladdens my Soul.
 I watch you with uplifted heart to-day,
 Even as I watched you through the years of War :
 And as I watch I worship, and I fling
 My challenge down the listening aisles of Time.
 I believe in England—
 That's my Creed.

Here are expressed the mind and character of a 'very gallant gentleman, who was much more than a literary man. Let us encourage ourselves and honour him by quoting Mr. Baron :—

" Since 1919, in London or in Sussex, Alfred Ollivant pursued his unconquerable, unseen way of life—always with some writing on hand, refusing to the last to be accounted an invalid 'on the shelf.' Neighbours and friends took their doubts and depressions to him, and to see him enter the room on his crutches, or to receive his welcome from the bed where he lay, immovable by the open window, was an unfailing tonic to them. For this sick man was full of health, and bent all his desires and all the powers of his mind and spirit towards the healing of the world's ills. Above all, he trusted passionately in the future : he was constantly sustained by his belief in the rising generation and by his clear faith in the new day coming. He strove to express this in his last book, finished before his death, and now about to be published. The title, *To-morrow*, may stand as the motto of his life-long optimism. If the public thinks of Alfred Ollivant as a writer of stimulating stories, his friends will remember, above all, the man—a soldier, disabled but never out of action, a prophet when they had great need of one, a high and abiding example to them of fortitude, gentleness, and faith in God and men."

POETRY OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

AN erudite and witty lecture on *Seventeenth Century Poetry*, full of apt quotation and pungent asides, was delivered by Miss Hadow, of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, at St. Saviour's and St. Olave's Girls' School as this year's annual poetry lecture founded by Mr. C. Oscar Gridley, as reported in the *South London Press*.

Miss Hadow pointed out that a spirit of experiment was abroad in the seventeenth century. They wrote poems in patterns, not caring much about the sense so long as the arrangement on paper was elegant. They worked acrostics into the first letter of each line. But their most wild extravagances were in the direction of similes. They seemed to think of two utterly opposite objects, and say "How can I bring these two together?" Just like the game of "Suggestions." Donne compared a man to a telescope: someone else saw a resemblance in man and wife to a pair of compasses.

As a typical example, here are some lines—*A Possit for Nature's Breakfast*—by the Duchess of Newcastle, who used to wake her household up in the night to write such stuff down:

“Life scums the cream of beauty with Time's spoon
And draws the claret wine of blushes soon;
Then boils it in a skillet clean of youth,
And thicks it well with crumbled bread of truth;
Sets it upon the fire of life which does
Burn clearer much when Health her bellows blows;
Then takes the eggs of fair and bashful eyes
And puts them in a countenance that's wise.
Cuts in a lemon of the sharpest wit;
Discretion as a knife is used for it.
A handful of chaste thoughts, double refined,
Six spoonfuls of a noble and gentle mind,
A grain of mirth to give it a little taste,
And take it off for fear the substance waste,
And puts it in a basin of good health,
And with this meat doth Nature please herself.”

The seventeenth century poets experimented in the sound of words, too. As Elizabethan verse may be compared to a great organ, what followed may be likened to a flute. It is light, charming, neat, polished, full of wit, but perhaps not very deep. Herrick is a past-master at this style of writing.

It seems, continued Miss Hadow, to be a necessity that every poet should be in love, and, if possible, crossed in love. The Elizabethans worked this theory to death. One such wrote a poem, and to this day no one knows whether he is addressing his lady love or his Cam-

bridge college. Extravagance in phrase and simile, no depth of real passion—that characterised both the Elizabethans and their immediate successors. They were too occupied in finding the right word to feel intensely their own emotions. Herrick was almost as interested in Julia's clothes as with Julia herself.

Cowley was another to follow this fashion. He wrote a long poem all about his loves—nineteen of them. These fair ladies merely served as pegs on which to hang a poem. The verse was all charming, pretty, neat, but it does not carry one very far on the road of passion.

Fortunately, human nature is not consistent : and the seventeenth century writers were but human. Though they were not swept away by an absorbing passion, yet they could be delightfully simple, even childish. They seemed to understand children. The Elizabethans were influenced by classical and Italian art. They had a passion for beauty, but it was a conventionalised beauty. Their countryside was full of nymphs and shepherds, loving swains and rosy-cheeked milkmaids—just like a fairy story. This country had no counterpart in real life. This style of writing had its echoes in the seventeenth century, but the artificiality is soon superseded by a simpler, more understanding view of nature. William Browne, of Tavistock, wrote a long rambling pastoral, with all the conventional gods and nymphs, but when he digresses to describe a scene, he does so in a most simple and engaging manner. He has lived with nature and sets down just what he has seen. George Herbert is full of such glimpses of English country life, true to life, and described with much feeling. But with Herbert a new factor is introduced. He sees in nature something mysterious and spiritual, besides the outward beauty. This may be explained by the intense religious feeling that he, and several others, had. Vaughan sees nature as if he had come from another planet. He views it with awe, with wonder. He sees the world again as a child might—as in *The Retreat*. Traherne, another of this school, held a theory that a baby was born in full possession of its intelligence, but not of its senses. He saw in this fact the hand of Providence, since the child would have so much to think about that it would have no time to talk about it.

From nature poetry with a religious background to religious poetry proper is but a step. It is here that the culminating point of the seventeenth century poetry is reached. The sense of beauty is refined and sublimed by the religious fervour, and something extraordinarily beautiful is produced. The unexpected similes,

the far-fetched phraseology is still there, and there are tricks of effect which seem queer at times, but these are so blended as to be truly beautiful. In spite of the quaintness, these poems pulse with sincerity and emotion.

ROSSETTI AS POET.

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

SIR,—In writing an article on *Rossetti as a Poet* (in the March-April issue of *THE POETRY REVIEW*), in which he mentions by name only two of his works, I think Mr. Stuart-Young has accomplished an almost unique feat. This singular abstinence, however, rather detracts from the value of his criticism. He tells us that in Rossetti's verse "one seeks in vain for that clear bugle-note which should characterise true poetry," and adduces in support of his statement only the true but hardly relevant fact that *The Blessed Damosel* is not like Emerson. His criticism, as distinct from his ill-conditioned depreciation of Rossetti as a man, consists merely of accusing him of not doing something which he never attempted or intended. He compares Rossetti's *Your hands lie open* with Wordsworth's *The world is too much with us*, and with marvellous acumen perceives an "incredulous (*sic*) difference" between them. But what value is there in a comparison of two poems of such entirely different aim and spirit?

Here are a few more examples of Mr. Stuart-Young's original critical method. In his opening paragraph he girds at the "moral strenuousness of contemporary art," yet later on he reproaches Rossetti for lack of it. Having told us that Rossetti "felt with an intensity that became at the last sheer morbidity," he says that Rossetti was not thin-skinned: and in an article on Rossetti as a poet he occupies most of the space with perverse exaggeration of the worse aspects of Rossetti's character as a man. Even if Rossetti had hordes of injudicious admirers, and even if most of them were women, or "members of the female sex" as Mr. Stuart-Young prefers to call them, what has that to do with his quality as a poet?

Mr. Stuart-Young makes great play with the adjective "morbid." This is cheap and easy criticism, and serves as a useful cloak to dull or wilful lack of appreciation. He says that if Rossetti had lived to-day he would have been president of a high-brow and futile society for "mutual self-worship"—whatever that remarkable exercise may be. Surely this is a triumph of irrelevant and ill-natured supposition, as his concluding paragraph is of complacent misstatement. To say that Rossetti's school is almost cleansed

from the records of British literature is the merest nonsense. From contemporary practice, certainly, and perhaps even that is not wholly a matter for self-congratulation; but names like Rossetti's are not easily expunged from the records of literature, even by Mr. Stuart-Young.

Huyton.

Yours, etc.,

GRAHAM G. HOUGH.

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

SIR,—I have just read the article on D. G. Rossetti, by J. M. Stuart-Young, in the March number of THE POETRY REVIEW, and feel constrained to reply to it.

Almost all of the statements in it are open to question; but it would take too long to answer all of them. One thing in particular strikes me as unfair, and that is the quotation of "Eat thou and drink; to-morrow thou shalt die," and the rest of that sonnet, as Rossetti's own philosophy of life. This sonnet is one of a sequence of three, together named "The Choice"; this first one does represent the voluptuous view of life; the second begins, "Watch thou and fear; to-morrow thou shalt die," and represents the morbidly religious or superstitious view; while the third, "Think thou and act; to-morrow thou shalt die," is the open-eyed manly view, ending with those far-reaching lines:—

"Miles and miles distant though the grey line be,
And though thy soul sail leagues and leagues beyond—
Still, leagues beyond those leagues, there is more sea."

If either of these sonnets is to be taken as an expression of Rossetti's personal philosophy of life and death, surely it is the final one; and it is an injustice to quote the first without any indication of its context.

Perhaps I may mention a few more points. The "Rossetti woman" as described in this article belongs to his later period; his art should not be judged without consideration of his earlier work, which is quite free from the exaggerations named. Regarding what Mr. Stuart-Young calls Rossetti's "favourite form of poison," Mr. Ford Madox Hueffer (who, being a relative of Rossetti, ought to know) tells us that the chloral was recommended by a friend who told him it was innocuous. "It was then a new remedy. In later years he recognised well enough its ill effects."

I think the question whether he ever laughed at himself can be answered by recalling some of the Limericks which he was in the

habit of composing about his friends and himself. I can remember the first two lines of one beginning :

“ There was a poor chap called Rossetti,
As a painter with many kicks met he ” ;

and one on his wife begins :—

“ There is a poor creature called Lizzie,
Whose aspect is meagre and frizzy.”

These and others can be found in the *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones*, by Lady Burne-Jones. The first volume of this most delightful book gives a totally different impression of what Rossetti was to his intimate contemporaries than is conveyed in Mr. Stuart-Young's article. A. C. Benson's life of Rossetti, in the English Men of Letters series, gives much light also. I will quote one passage from this :—“ It cannot be too strongly insisted upon that in ordinary life he had no touch of mysterious solemnity or of artificial dignity, but rather a strong relish for humorous contrasts and witty images. He was fond of contagious jests and loud laughter, and heartily despised any attempt to view life in ordinary intercourse from any but the most natural and robust standpoint.”

Is it not time that we should put aside that old idea which led to “ The Fleshly School of Poetry ” (it is not true, by the way, that this “ afforded him only amusement ”) and take some account of Robert Buchanan's amends after Rossetti's death, when he said he had been most unjust in impugning the purity of Rossetti's work. These unjust criticisms added to the tragedy of the latter part of Rossetti's life, and it is quite time to recognise them for what they were worth, not to revive them. Let him be judged, not by his years of failing health and clouded mind, but by what he was and what he did when he was a king among his friends (men-friends, let it be noted !), full of enthusiasm, generosity, and humour ; drawing exquisite heads of Miss Siddal so that they rank among the lovely things of the world ; translating the *Vita Nuova* into such a thing of grace and beauty that all who do not know Italian owe him gratitude if only for that alone, beside his other translations ; and poems of his own in which I for one find nothing of that “ cloying sweetness ” complained of. *The Portrait* is an instance ; let me end with the last verse of this :—

“ Here with her face doth memory sit
Meanwhile, and wait the day's decline,

Till other eyes shall look from it,
 Eyes of the spirit's Palestine,
 Even then the old gaze tenderer :
 While hopes and aims long lost with her
 Stand round her image side by side,
 Like tombs of pilgrims that have died
 About the Holy Sepulchre."

Yours, etc.,

The Waldrons, Croydon.

CICELY M. BARKER.

[We are glad to print this reasoned defence of a great poet and artist against the point of view adopted by our contributor, whom we believe to be sincere as well as vigorous and able to express and justify an individual opinion intended to provoke readers to a fresh appreciation of Rossetti.—ED.]

THE INTERNATIONAL POETRY UNION.

THE LADY MAUD WARRENDER sent out the following from New York WEAf broadcast on April 7th:—"As President of the Poetry Society of Great Britain, I appreciate the opportunity to speak this message from England to America to our affiliated groups in America. I have received a great many kind invitations to visit these chapters which would have given me great pleasure, but this being impossible, I thought it would be best to communicate with them and all who are interested in poetry and this society, in this comprehensive way. I rejoice to say that Mrs. Alice Hunt Bartlett is again our American Editor, and it is due to her arduous work and enthusiasm that these groups and individual members were spread over here. The Poetry Society is in its 19th year of existence. Its *raison d'être*, which it has achieved to some extent, was the bringing together of those who are seriously concerned with poetry—not only poets but lovers of poetry. It constitutes a world-wide fellowship in almost every country, and our POETRY REVIEW has, in consequence, a very extended circulation and is a useful means of creating an international appreciation of poetry. We believe in poetry as an interest to be cultivated with music and all the arts—in fact, I have heard in America that it is considered one of the highest arts.

"Our society in England, in particular, has been able to bring continuous influence to bear upon young people, by directing the formation of poetic taste, and respect for the great eternal things in human life, by means of our verse speaking examinations and

competitions, which have an influence not possible to achieve in any other way. These examinations have been adopted throughout the English-speaking world.

"In fact, the Poetry Society might be called a practical International Union, for stimulating the further appreciation of poetry, and as such should, I think, appeal in America, for those who appreciate it, to join up with the chapters through the American Founder and Editor. It is an honour to stand here in this country where poetry is a dynamic force and where the greatest traditions of poetry have always been upheld." In closing, Lady Maud read two of her favourite poems, a Shakespearean sonnet and one modern poem.—Lady Maud gave out a further broadcast message on Shakespeare's birthday with special reference to the Shakespeare recitals.

* * *

Mrs. Bartlett gave a dinner on April 6 at the Park Lane for Lady Maud Warrender, President-General of the Poetry Society. Among those present were Rear-Admiral Bradley A. Fiske (who acted as toastmaster), Professor Curtis H. Page, Joseph Auslander, Edward Steese, Miss Marion Mason Manheim, Seth Bliss Hunt, Mrs. Finley Thomas, Colonel Wellington Furlong, Mrs. Edwin Markham, Edwin Markham, Jun., Prince Pierre Troubetzkov, Mrs. Bainbridge Colby, Oswald Garrison Villard, and Robert Bridges. Col. Furlong, in paying an eloquent tribute to "the potency of poetry and two women—our beloved hostess and our honoured guest—pointed out that "had it not been for poetry that distinguished and delightful assemblage could not have been."

* * *

LORD LYTTON AND THE REVOLUTION OF THOUGHT.

At a general meeting of the Calcutta Centre of the Poetry Society held in the hall of the Indian Society of Oriental Arts, Mr. R. C. Bonnerjee, M.A., barrister-at-law, read a lengthy and interesting paper on "Some Modern Writers of English Poetry." His Excellency the Governor, Lord Lytton, who is one of the Patrons of the Society, addressed the meeting. His Excellency said that he was glad of the opportunity of making the acquaintance of the Poetry Society and its members. Poetry, like music or art, was one of those pleasures of life which one could not do without. He took it that it was the function of such a Society like this to enable its members to introduce to each other the poetry that they knew and which perhaps might not be very familiar to other members. He wished that he were a poet, but he was the son and grandson of a poet, and as such might perhaps claim to have special sympathy

with the objects of this Society. He was particularly glad that Mr. Bonnerjee should have chosen on this occasion a subject about which he had spoken to them, because many of those authors of whom mention had been made by Mr. Bonnerjee were His Excellency's personal friends, and he hoped that as a result of what Mr. Bonnerjee had told them they might become intimately acquainted with those authors, at any rate through their writings. He wanted particularly to refer to one poem which Mr. Bonnerjee had not mentioned, and that was the *Ballad of the White Horse*. It was not only one of the finest pieces of ballad poetry produced in their age, but he supposed that every generation was apt to regard with special reverence the authors of the past, and to think that nothing worthy of the past could exist in the minds of their own contemporaries. Mr. Bonnerjee had spoken of Modern Poetry as a movement. In one sense it was correct, but in another sense it was not. By movement was meant the Labour Movement, the Women Movement, the Swaraj Movement in the sense of common purpose. It was due to common ideals and it was not true to speak of authors as having a common movement. They ought to produce the greatest revolution in thought that had ever taken place in the world, and it was that which they did not realise. He would try and express the revolution of thought that was in his mind. The feeling of the young world to-day was the feeling of genuine search, curiosity, and desire to explore. Nothing was accepted by young men nowadays simply because mother, father, or teacher taught it. If it was proved to be true they would accept it, but if it was not true they would say that it had nothing to do with them. That, His Excellency believed, was the revolution in thought which had come into being by five years of terrible war. It was found in the younger generation and in all countries of the world.

VERSE SPEAKING EXAMINATION PASS LIST

Great Malvern, March 17th, 1927.

CERTIFICATE CLASS—Junior (Honours): Vera Elderton, Helen Hancock, Sylvia Mather, Elizabeth Tabor. (Commended): Crystal Hughes, Eileen Kettlewell, Valerie Jenkin, Freda Johnson. (Pass): Ena Spence, Betty Cuffe.

Senior (Special Distinction): Rosamund Crowther, Mary Edmonds, Marjory Holme, Freda Miles, Mary King-Wilkinson. (Honours): Bridget Castle, Joan Grice-Hutchinson, Mary Hallam, Winifred Thomson, Betty Wright. (Commended): Margaret Hood, Nancie Spencer. (Pass): Jacqueline Salmon.

BRONZE MEDAL CLASS—Senior (Special Distinction): Molly Beevor, Marion Allsebrook, Enid Cobb, Dorothy Clingan, Kitty Hobson, Beatrice Lister, Joan Meikle, Petronilla James. (Honours): Evelyn Allsebrook, Yvonne Franklin-Thomas, Betty Hobson, Rhona Orme, Jean Riley, Violet Spencer. (Commended): Diana Cooke, Joanna Douglas, Carolina Reuchlin, Ruth Toppin.

SILVER MEDAL CLASS—Senior (Special Distinction): Jean Evans, Mary Gladstone Walker. (Honours): Helen Braid.

Stockton, March 19th, 1927.

CERTIFICATE CLASS—Junior (Honours): Joyce Mitchell, Eva Baker, Robert Guerin, Margaret Elizabeth Kaye, Annie Nora Wolsey, Muriel Pailor. (Commended): Robert Lumley, Hilda Peacock, Phoebe Charlton, Esmee Carter, Nellie Palliser, Kathleen Hopkinson, Muriel Richards, Jessie James, John Leonard Sanderson, Evelyn Callender, Robina Parker. (Pass): Dorothy Wells, Annie Blench, John Scott, Irene Rowlands, Alwyn Jesseman, Ian Grant, Robert Carter, Hugh Birks, Jessie Fraser, Mollie Charlton, Enid Wilcox, Nancy Foster, Sidney Cartman, Nora Rowlands.

Senior (Special Distinction): Gwendolyn Bond. (Honours): Janet Lloyd, Mary Sturrock, Freda Richmond. (Commended): Winsome Leak, Rennie Warnes, Joan Hird. (Pass): Lily Reece, Marjorie Mercer, Betty Bow, John Westwood Crosby.

Adult (Honours): Eva Dauge, Elsie Garbutt, Wynne Robson, Winnie Messenger. (Commended): Irene Williamson, Dorothy Elliot, Nan Boyd, Dorothy Blackett.

BRONZE MEDAL CLASS—Junior (Special Distinction): Wyvis Ray. (Honours): Bessie D'Alby, Maud Raine, John B. Skillbeck. (Commended): Elsie Glover, Jennie Roberts, Laura Bennett, Abigail Wilkinson. (Pass): Betty Boddy, Phyllis Hartas, Marjorie Fell, Sheila Bower, Joan Appleton. **Senior (Commended):** Winifred M. Dawson, Lydia Nellist, Mary Pearson, Nora Ross. (Pass): Gordon Lumley, Gladys Barker.

Adult (Pass): Ethel Booth.

SILVER MEDAL CLASS—Junior (Pass): Freda G. Rawe, Joan S. Glover, Olwen Morris.

Senior (Pass): Norman Maddison.

Adult (Pass): Edith Morland, Doris Fryer, Hilda Chambers, Frederick Henry Pennock.

Sheffield, March 15th, 1927.

CERTIFICATE CLASS.—Juniors (Special Distinction): Elsie M. Peacock. (Honours): Mary Abbott, Jay Dene, Joan Atkin. (Commended): Maimie Beatrice Cooke, Joan Margaret Lamb, Joan

Potter, Charles Bramall. (Pass): Audrey Hammert, Lorna Graham, Muriel Fletcher, Joan Isobel Muirhead, Lily Vann, Philip Young, Margaret Fearnough, Rita June Hill, Jean Lockley, Philip Hopper, Marjory Darby, Eileen Richardson, Joan Sibbald, Jean Vasey.

Senior (Special Distinction): Jean Muriel Taylor. (Honours): Irene Wrigley, Minette Rita Latham, Joan Constance Bailey, Barbara Elliott, Phyllis Danzey. (Commended): Molly Parton, Hilda Hobson, Kathleen Kelly, Joan Edwards. (Pass): Margaret Barker, Colin W. Bell.

Adult (Honours): Sibyl Hoyland, Lily Hopkin, Richard E. Taylor, Helen Broadley Swinden. (Commended): Mrs. Wilkinson, Daisy Brailsford. (Pass): Eileen Muriel Trevlyn.

BRONZE MEDAL CLASS—Junior (Pass): Peggy Brown, Margaret Atkinson.

Senior (Honours): Doris Glossop. (Commended): Joyce Hinchliffe, Kenneth Arnold. (Pass): Eileen Graham.

Adult (Honours): Marjorie Warden, Ethel Hague. (Commended): Rene Baker, Annie MacArthur. (Pass): Emanuel Levy.

SILVER MEDAL CLASS—Junior (Honours): Angela Parton. (Commended): Margaret Gaunt. (Pass): Eileen Elliss.

Senior (Honours): Hilda Wilshaw, Eileen F. R. Ramsay. (Commended): Muriel Mountford, Dorothy Milner, Kathleen Ibbotson, Marie Copestake. (Pass): Alice Osborne.

Adult (Special Distinction): Beryl Pryce. (Honours): Jessie S. Hill, Edith Woodhead. (Commended): Marjorie Hirst, Bessie Hirst, Marian P. Cooper, Florence Ellis, Janet K. Mitchell. (Pass): Mary Underwood, Nancy Kaye.

St. Helen's, Northwood, March 24th, 1927

CERTIFICATE CLASS.—Junior, Honours: Daphne Richards. Commended: Betty Welsdon. Pass: Elizabeth Gloyne. Senior—Special Distinction: Maisie Terrell, N. Breukelman. Honours: Ann Harvey, C. Brittain, Joyce Burnett, Mayna Dawson, Rose Stovin-Bradford, Doreen Farmer. Commended: Olga Coates, K. Bally, H. Burrows, Barbara Chambers, Joan Eastman, Pat Marsh, Sylvia Battye, J. Bedingfeld. Pass: Joan Rae.

BRONZE MEDAL CLASS.—Junior—Honours: K. Clark. Pass: Joan M. Adams, Gwenda Pomeroy, Mary Canning. Senior—Commended: Margaret Mothersill, B. Mackinnon. Pass: R. Collie, M. Cushman.

SILVER MEDAL CLASS.—Junior—Honours: Joan Moore. Senior—Commended: Joyce Ashwell. Pass: Silva Morris.

SCHOOL'S GOLD MEDAL.—Joan White.

VERSE SPEAKING EXAMINATIONS

221

Brighton and Worthing, April 2nd, 1927

CERTIFICATE CLASS.—Junior: (Honours) Joyce Avery. (Commended) Doreen Harmer, Rosalind Hender, Molly Grummitt, Sylvia Haase. (Pass) Eleanor Parry. Senior: (Honours) Meyvis Cleburne, Adrienne le Lubez, Queenie Fowler. (Commended) Muriel Smith, Yvonne Burkett, Hazel Morris. (Pass) Gwyn Dolphin. Adult: (Honours) Phyllis Couchman. (Commended) Nonie Howe, Marion C. Judd, Irene F. Huntly, Peggy Targett.

BRONZE MEDAL CLASS.—Junior: (Special Distinction) Beryl Pockett. (Commended) Elsie M. Lawrence, Cissie Rose. (Pass) Joan S. Willder. Senior: (Honours) Gladys Mauger, Muriel E. Hewitt. (Commended) Isabelle Meek, Sybil Lethbridge, Jean Merry, Margaret Davis, Dorothy Astington, Molly Hill, Edith Overbury. (Pass) Marjorie Hill, Ina Hills. Adult: (Commended) Olive B. Plummer.

SILVER MEDAL CLASS.—Junior: (Honours) Hilda Bass, Vera Bass. (Commended) Sadie Specterman. Senior: (Honours) Minnie McEwan Law. (Commended) Doris Alsford, Edna Joyce Brown.

University of London, February 26th, 1927.

CERTIFICATE CLASS.—Junior (Commended): Una Ireland.

Senior (Special Distinction): Dorothy Sharpe. (Honours): Freda Allwood, Elsie Chamberlain, Barbara Frey. (Commended): Jean Blaikie.

Adult (Honours): Marjorie Fischer. (Pass): Monica J. Merlin, Ethel Elems, Sybil Smith, Miss W. I. Diplock, Mabel D. Webb.

BRONZE MEDAL CLASS.—Senior (Commended): Betty Roll.

Adult (Commended): Violet Van Houten, Mrs. Minshall.

SILVER MEDAL CLASS.—Senior (Honours): Sylvia Talbot, Roma Thrift. (Commended): Cynthia Streatfeild. (Pass): Mary Eleanor Thurston, Alison Bateman.

Adult (Pass): Lily M. Griffen, Lucretia Boggia.

March 26th, 1927.

CERTIFICATE CLASS.—Junior (Honours): Beatrice Weiner, Sylvia Posalski, Marie Epstein, Margaret Pruskin. (Commended): Lucie Mundy, Sarah Spencer Churchill, John Whichcord, Barbara Phillips, Betty Strange, Miriam Grovie. (Pass): Mona M. C. Harrison, Nora Enderley, Adreen Enderby, Irene Bussey, Betty German, Pamela Nicholson, Marjorie Bentley, Muriel Briggs, Edna Cohen, Hazel Jackaman, Josie Hallam, Mary Leete, George King.

Senior (Special Distinction): Phyllis Mary Philp, Pamela Govan, (Honours): Margaret Standley, Gwyneth Mary Williams, Doris Rosenberg, Kathleen Garbett, Nancy Stevens, Amy Treweek.

(Commended): Vera Cresswell, Mildred Hoyle, Beryll Birchmore, Jean Mackenzie Fraser, Barbara Mary Elsworth, Elsie Amy MacDonald, Beryl Myra Green, Ruth Swinstead, Helen Derry. (Pass): Betty Louise Foster, Anne Elizabeth Elsworth, Kathleen Reed, Sheila Keeble Curtis, Dorothy Edwards, Vera Curtis, Doris Shilton, Phyllis Wenyon, Diana Caldwell, Beryl Paine, Isobel Heap.

Adult (Special Distinction): Mrs. Mackinder, Thos. H. Bell, (Honours): Dorothy Agnes Robinson, Nora Huckbody, E. M. Naxton. (Commended): Barbara Blandford.

BRONZE MEDAL CLASS—Junior (Honours): Enid Dorothy McAdam. (Commended): Una Ierland, Betty Springer, Jean Bellingham, Rene Rowland. (Pass): Barbara M. Graham, Marion Lily Collett, Anne Ruth Purnell-Edwards, Bertha Weiner.

Senior (Honours): Dorothy Standley. (Commended): Ursula Blackwell, Jean Sibbald Blaikie, Elizabeth Bevan, Jean Vickers, Betty Margaret Roberts, Irene Ouston, Marion Wake. (Pass): Peter Dearing, Elizabeth Eliot, Nancy Phillippa Draper, Diana Mary Quentin Hewitt, Audrey Blundell Jones, Dorothy Duck, Josephine Hall, Margaret Berry, Joy Du Pre.

Adult (Pass): Mrs. A. Buxton, E. Bellingham Smith.

SILVER MEDAL CLASS—Junior (Commended): Hilda Joyce Hobson.

Senior (Honours): Gladys Grimsdick, J. Porter-Fletcher. (Commended): Emily Walker, Clara Smocleare. (Pass): Irene Cholmondeley.

Adult (Honours): Marjorie Smith. (Commended): Annie Bishop. (Pass): Peggy S. Roberts.

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The Annual General Business Meeting of The Poetry Society (Incorporated) will be held at the offices of the Society, 16 Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.1, on Friday, June 10th, 1927, at 4.30 p.m., to receive the annual financial statement and elect the seven elected members of the General Council, and to adopt proposed alterations in the Articles of Constitution.

Names of delegates representing Centres should be sent to the General Secretary not later than June 1st.

Any member who wishes to bring any proposal before the Annual Meeting must give 28 days' written notice thereof to the General Secretary. Nominations for membership of the General Council must be made by two members of the General Council or three unattached members 28 days prior to the meeting.

FRED J. HUNTINGFORD,

By order of the Council, April 29th, 1927. General Secretary.

NOTES, REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS 223

A Poetry Recital will be given at the Blackfriars Theatre, Lever House, Thames Embankment, on Tuesday evening, May 31st, by holders of the Poetry Society's silver medal for excellence in verse-speaking, the recital constituting the Spring Examination for the Society's gold medal. Holders of the various verse-speaking awards and members of the Poetry Society are urged to support this distinctive event, which demonstrates an important phase of the Society's work. Tickets should be obtained in advance (5s. reserved, and 2s. 6d.) from the General Secretary, 16, Featherstone Buildings, W.C.1. Members taking one or more tickets before May 29th are entitled to one complimentary ticket.

* * *

Arising out of a realisation that Joan of Arc is a fit subject for idealisation, proposals have been made for the organisation of a special party to participate in the Fête of St. Joan at Rouen on May 29th-30th. Reduced train and hotel rates will be quoted and other special facilities provided. Further particulars of this "pilgrimage" to the ancient capital of Normandy—the most interesting French city near our own shores—may be obtained from THE POETRY REVIEW, 16, Featherstone Buildings, W.C.1.

* * *

The results of the Winter Festival of Arts and Letters, organised by the Panton Arts Club, are announced. In the Poetry Section, the adjudicators included Mr. John Drinkwater, Mr. Ernest Rhys, Mr. Frank Kendon and Mr. Edwin Faulkner. Bronze medals were awarded to Lionel Haweis (published volume), H. M. Green (longer poem), Robert D. Fitzgerald (unpublished volume), and certificates of hon. mention to Erda Lang, Ierne Ormsby and Hilda McDonald (short poems).

* * *

The Three Hundred Club, in its capacity of a branch of the Incorporated Stage Society, will give performances of "David," a biblical play by Mr. D. H. Lawrence, on Sunday evening and Monday afternoon, May 22nd and 23rd. The producer will be Mr. Ernest Milton. Membership of the joint societies for this and the last production of the season, Mr. Eugene O'Neill's "The Great God Brown," which will be given a few weeks later, can now be obtained at half the usual rates of subscription. Applications should be made to the Secretary, Mr. W. Matthew Norgate, at 36, Southampton Street, Strand.

The following Kensington Centre meetings have been arranged : May 12th, The Rev. John W. Niven, D.D., on "Imagination," Garden House, Cornwall Gardens, S.W.7 ; May 26th, M. Cammaerts, "The Poetry of Nonsense," Park House Club, 15, Bolton Street, W. ; June 9th, Mrs. Mends-Gibson, "The Centenary of Blake," 24, Ladbroke Road, W.11 ; July 7th, (at 8.30), Mrs. Lambert Lack presents *Robin Hood*, by Alfred Noyes, 31, Marlborough Place, N.W.8. Members are requested to note that the June 23rd meeting will be held at the Park House Club, owing to the absence of Mrs. Lathrop.

* * *

The Barnet Centre commemorated the Beethoven Centenary on April 1st with a programme arranged by Mr. W. A. Richards, and on April 30th Mr. Alfred Noyes gave a lecture and readings from his own works. For May 13th a Wordsworth reading has been arranged by Miss Mather, and for May 27th a reading of *The Light of Asia*, arranged by Mrs. Gooding.

* * *

The following programme has been arranged for the Hampstead Centre :—May 3rd, Paintings ; May 17th, The Frogs of Aristophanes ; June 7th, Alexander Pope ; June 21st, Fruits ; July 5th, John Fletcher's *Bonduca*. The meetings are held at Miss Julie Huntsman's studios, 150, Finchley Road, N.W.3, at 7.45 p.m.—Hon. Secretary, Mr. J. F. Tilley, 32, Camden Square, N.W.1, from whom particulars of membership can be obtained.

* * *

The meetings of the Golders Green Centre are held at Woodstock School, Golders Green Road, N.W.11, at 8 p.m., as under. (Will members kindly note alterations in dates of meeting in June, consequent upon the Whitsuntide holidays.) May 6th, Twentieth Century Poets ; May 20th, American Poets ; June 10th, Gardens ; June 24th, Scenes from Shakespeare's plays. Applications for membership should be sent to the Honorary Secretary, 32, Camden Square, N.W.1.

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The following programme has been arranged for the Highgate centre :—May 2nd, Spenser and Dryden ; May 16th, Personalities and Characters ; June 6th, Whit-Monday (no meeting) ; June 20th, Rivers and Lakes ; July 4th, Music and Musical Instruments. The meetings to be held at the Literary Institution, South Grove, Highgate Village.—Hon. Sec., Mrs. Bouman, 10, Stanhope Road, N.6.

“IMAGINATION, EVER EXPANDING”

WE have sometimes been reproached with having belittled the work of the modern poets, and with dwelling too continuously on the past men of greatness. If this has been the case it has arisen more from sorrow than from prejudice. In fact, however, we have brought forward with insistence some of the new poets whose originality in thought and structure has been evident, but this has met with little or no response.

In all ages there have existed poisonous little groups, or coteries, whose sole business has been to rake over mediocrity so long as it pours forth from a member of the particular set. This is subversive of all sound judgment. It was this uncritical attitude that roused Macaulay to his stinging article on Montgomery, and who shall aver now that his castigation of that versifier was not justified? The Prodigal Son rejected husks because he remembered the pure bread of his Father's house, nor would he have suffered himself to be persuaded that husks were better because sound bread was old-fashioned and therefore the new substitute must be accepted; it could only be the swine who would advance this argument. We have here a poem by Humbert Wolfe (Ernest Benn, Limited), a very fine piece of work; the sustaining flour, made by our fathers, is used although the form of the loaf may differ.

Requiem, meaning a mass sung for the dead, may account for the musical reiteration of “Lucifer who fell with Adam, and Azrael who took his place in heaven,” the dead appealing from the “old Adam” to the soothing Angel of Death. There are unforgettable lines in this poem, and the whole is welded together with a powerful imagination. These dead “Losers” come before us and force us to join in their great Requiem. *The Hucksters* passionately pulsates with life: it is as keen as a butcher's knife, and, like it, drips with the life-blood of the heart; drawing to its culmination in a slow-moving, splendid sonnet. *The Soldier*, again, is a crystal of beauty; the concluding stanzas, to do them adequate justice, should be quoted in full. They are the Vox Humana of the organ roll of the Requiem. The power of the music seems to falter somewhat in

The Lovers; "He" and "She" leave a less vivid impression; we feel that they are speaking in charming language, but with none of that burning, consuming quality that glowed from those prototypes of lovers in all ages, Abelard and Heloise. And what exactly is intended to be conveyed by "His" concluding lines—

"—and woman

So named when she redeemed the fallen sun
With the vicarious silver of the moon" ?

On the face of it we comprehend that, the sun having sunk, the moon, her light reflected from him, redeems the dark, but it appears to have no connection with lovers, unless, indeed, he is comparing himself to the orb of day and her to the lesser light, which hardly seems to be lover-like. But, on the other hand, strength and fury run headlong in the verses, *The Anarchists*, and these are the only ones in which the protagonists harshly justify themselves and utter no word of hope or of appeal. They dash themselves to pieces, blown, as it were, into fragments with their own deadly bombs. But, even for them, we deem, some archangel might plead their hopeless rage over hopeless wrongs, yet Humbert Wolfe leaves them cursing: not for them as for the harlots:

"You, Magdalen,

rather this head anoint with spikenard, and with your hand
make smooth the puzzled brow that did not understand."

Throughout the poem an echo faintly rings—faint, it may be, as the scent of roses in the jar—an echo of Blake, not in the workmanship, but in the underlying thought and vision. Hear Humbert Wolfe:

"This is your poem. I shall not write its fellow
earthsides of immortality . . .

. . . I only know this poem is not mine."

It might be Blake speaking.

Again, in *The Harlot*:

"All the world over in every town and city
there is a furtive shuffle of tired feet. . . .

. . . and while a single woman earns her bread
by blasphemy committed in love's name
not only she, but all our world is dead.”

And Blake :

“ The harlot's cry from street to street
Shall weave old England's winding sheet.”

And are not Lucifer and Azrael, and Michael, echoes of Blake's symbolising things under personal names ? Blake was arbitrary and obscure at times, which Humbert Wolfe is not, but the change is in the times and not in the man.

Requiem concludes in a gathering together of all the poem and a recalling of the cries to Mary, Ashtaroth, Lucifer, Azrael and Michael. The rhythm and the roll are gathered into a supreme pity :

“ And Mary Mother, to whom this much was given,
dream like the rest and, like the rest, out dreaming
this dream of life, remember these in heaven,
and in that world where there's an end of seeming,
for all these dead,
Mary, be comfortable for the uncomforted.”

This short survey leaves a great deal unsaid of the strength and the beauty of this poem, and, on the obverse side, of some lines that are obscure, we do but stand like a signpost by the way ; let those that desire large visions follow and find for themselves the originality of thought, the Imagination “ ever expanding in the bosom of God.” Here is food for the spirit, and if there be a crust occasionally, why, such hard morsels are good for strong teeth. Humbert Wolfe writes of *The Builders* that which may be adopted for his own work :

“ As all who teach, building with common stuff
as the builder with the earth, can never rest
nor find the beauty they fashion is enough
beside the one unfashionable best,
whose golden strands
escape their hands for ever, and are not made with hands.”

ARTHUR HOOD.

ANDROMEDA

WITH slow and calm magnificence
From out the low'ring summer night,
Rides Dawn.
For one short space his eyes are stayed
Upon the curving olive bay.
Below, the tow'ring granite cliff,
Wave-worn,
Unmov'd by the sea's caress
Wherein a thousand colours play,
Stands grimly sentinel and stiff.
And there, as one transfixed, he sees
Pearl white against the blackened rocks,
Save where the dawning sun hath caught
The glorious red gold of her locks,
And tinged the lapping waves with fire,
The outline of a maiden—lone
And still. So still, it seemed that she
But for her gently falling tears,
Man might have carved from milky stone,
And set to guard an opal sea.

I. K. NAGEL.

THE POETS' SONG

WE are the sculptors of our secret hearts ;
And we dream dreams that are bedewed with
tears.

Our holiest thoughts we weave in patterned verse,
And sing sad songs, to echo down the years.

But who will care, and who but scoffers hear
The beating of our hearts, the signs of pain ?
Unthinking men may read our burning words,
Even sigh awhile—and then forget again.

So all the travail and the pain are lost ;
In vain we agonised, our souls laid bare.
Why should we sing our songs with none to hear ?
Why should we break our hearts with none to care ?

MARGOT K. MACKILLOP BROWN.

MODERN ITALIAN POETS

WE descry in the Italian poetry of the nineteenth century two main currents that may be distinguished by the goal the poets set to themselves, by observing whither they are tending and what they are aiming at. Some of them try to put into evidence *the soul*—the expression of a face, the spirit of a landscape, the splendour of abstract beauty. Others are interested in human affairs, in history and science, in events and theories, in the progress of the world. The first I shall call the *mystic*, the second the *realistic* current. Both are romantic in their essence, though the form these singers use may be a classical one; and all these flowers expand their various chalices at the romantic breeze blowing from England and France. Their souls were thirsting for a visionary beauty. Italy was writhing under the rod of foreign powers; and the more squalid and sordid the world, the intenser and fiercer the need of gorgeous dreams to take refuge and shelter in. In all of them there is the love of vanished or vanishing things, of ideals unrealised, of the beautiful shadows that pass in the spiritual twilight of poetical reverie.

I take my starting point from Foscolo, Leopardi and Manzoni. Ugo Foscolo gave Italy her first great romantic poem with his *Sepolcri*, a beautiful song tintured by the influence of the English poets of the Churchyard school, especially of Gray. The romantic spirit is throwing a mist of melancholy dreaminess on our bright lands, a mist which is blown from the fields of England, and, with Macpherson, from the Highlands of Scotland. Yet we find in Foscolo's poems, in *The Sepulchres*, in the two fine *Odes to Louise Pallavicini*, in his sonnets, and, above all, in *The Graces*—the last only a fragment, though a glorious one—a classical tone, a Greek purity and force.

Leopardi is the greatest of our romantic poets; his work is a branch of the romantic tree that sharply diverges from the ascending boughs of Manzoni, and bends to the dark ground, but bears beautiful—if poisonous and deadly—flowers. He is in sharp contrast to the author of the

Sacred Hymns. He is withheld from faith rather than by intellectual pride—as it is the case with Swinburne—by a feeling of intense pain and despair, by his bitterness at life's deceptions; he does not recognise the divinity of sorrow; he does not enter, trusting a heavenly Father, in what Carlyle calls, in *Sartor Resartus*, "The Divine Temple of Sorrow." He stands outside, exploring the silent waste of Eternity, like his shepherd in the deserts of Asia, gazing at the mysterious features of the sphinx-like universe with a fixed, relentless look, searching for the aim and finality of life; but he is looking at life and the world reflected, as it were, in a darkened mirror. Hence—as he finds no meaning to human aspirations—his bitterness at life's delusions; hence his conception of the human race as trodden down by a pitiless fate—"Fate, whose name is Sorrow," was saying almost at the same time, but in lands far away, the poet of *Ulalume*. He conceives the earth as a sphere burning with passion, and wrapped in the black reek of grief and pain. This conception of life leads him first to a sense of pity for mankind, then to despair, and lastly to a sneering indifference. "Here, sluggishly, motionless lying,—I look at the earth, the sea and the sky,—and I smile." And this smile is full of bitter scorn, and contempt, and defiance.—"The infinite vanity of all!"

E l'infinita vanità del tutto!

This is his final statement. It is no more man's flight from destiny, as in the Greek drama, but his desperate acceptance of it. The poet is weary of being always goaded on by a delusive yearning, and he wishes to be free of any desire.

He gazes with contempt and scorn on the human race, so miserable, afflicted with so many evils, and yet so stupidly proud. In his poem *The Gorse* he laughs and sneers at mankind's so-called progress. When we consider the keynote of all his poems: the vanity of human effort, we are reminded of Dürer's *Melancholy*; as in Dürer's wonderful and haunting allegory, the soul is here sitting in sadness and desolation among the implements of

art and science, among musical instruments and sextants and astrolabes, while the star of Hope is setting like a sinister comet in the Sea of Despair ; and the bat Death is flitting near.

Nevertheless his philosophical conception—in fact no logical system of thought in itself—could not make him free of the world. He might have been quiet and serene had he not been tortured and stung by unrealised aspirations. It is not the resigned and calm fatalism of Omar Kháyyám, although there is a common trait between the two poets ; both the Persian and the Italian poet complain of quickly departing youth, of youth flown away on unreturning wings.

Alas, that Spring should vanish with the Rose !
That Youth's sweet-scented Manuscript should close !
The Nightingale that in the branches sang,
Ah, whence, and whither flown again, who knows ?

The same idea, joined with a deeper regret, we find worded in several passages of Leopardi's *Canti*.

But, although there is a kind of horror in his representation of human life in the *Song to the Moon of a Shepherd wandering in the Deserts of Asia*, and a terror of the infinite silence of the starry space—as in Pascal's "The silence of these infinite spaces fills me with dread !"—it is not as if he shrank in fear from life. It is rather as if he, careless at last of his and of all suffering, watching life and its sorrows with still, cold eyes, set his love on Death, whom he represents, not as a skeleton, but as a beautiful maiden. There was a desperate longing to love in his heart, and it is often mirrored in his lines ; in *Consalvo*, for instance, he complains of being kept far from love, and he is yearning towards it in his obscure suffering. Yet, like Poe, he worshipped a love-star sacred to Hecate, the star of Ulalume, "Astarte's bediamonded crescent," whose crystalline radiance is leading but to a tomb. All his beloved—Nerina, Silvia—died young, and their delicate white faces stand out from his mournful verse as wan flowers from the folds of black draperies.

And yet his sorrow is never wild ; there are no tragic outcries in his utterance ; the most cruel sarcasm, or the deepest grief, is distinctly, calmly, sometimes even coldly, spoken out, or, rather, sung. It is the melodious, quiet and profound sorrow of Schumann's marvellous " *lied* " *Still Tears*. The feeling aroused by his poems—not one excepted—is an emotion of pain and despair, but also of imperishable loveliness, the dark distress of his heart being always purified—as by a final " *catharsis* "—by the bright flame of beauty.

His conception of our existence is so disquieting and morbid that he has found until now but few followers ; his influence, however, may be discerned not only in Italy but in England. We see it in James Thomson, who translated several of Leopardi's *Dialogues* and used his sombre palette in *The City of Dreadful Night*. And it may be seen in Italian poetry in Arturo Graf—particularly in his early work, *Medusa*—and, through Graf, in Giovanni Cena.

At any rate, in spite of whatever can be said against his theories, Leopardi is profoundly and constantly sincere ; and it is owing to this sincerity that he displays such striking originality in his poems. Though undeniably romantic in feeling, if not in form, he is quite independent of foreign influences, while Foscolo was influenced by Gray, and Manzoni by Scott. As regards style, the approximation to Greek purity and grace that was perceptible in Foscolo is far more evident and close in Leopardi. He was instinct with the very spirit of classic culture ; and his lyrics are like bas-reliefs on funereal slabs, of a Greek vigour and grace, the golden simplicity of his sharp and subtle style being based on an Hellenic limpidity of outline and noble charm.

Manzoni and Leopardi take opposite views of life. Clear to Manzoni is the mystery of sorrow, and the meaning of pain, the only way to perfection. While Leopardi's poetry is like a mournful night, Manzoni's is like a serene dawn, where the sacred purity of the morning star, tinged with rose by the approaching sunrise, is shining brightly. He is the main representative of religious poetry in the

nineteenth century, preluded to by Paradisi, and followed, not unworthily, by Giacomo Zanella.

We notice in the first of his *Sacred Hymns—Christmas*—a rushing vigour of rhythm, in *The Passion*, grave and moving harmonies; in *The Pentecost*—a song of praise to the Holy Ghost as protector of the Church, “Mother of Saints, image of the supernal City”—and in *The Resurrection* the poet expresses his hope of eternal bliss for the just. Especially fine is the fifth and last hymn, *The Name of Mary*. These lyrics are built upon the eternal anthems of the Church, of which he deeply feels the beauty of the ritual, and are full of Biblical allusions. His soul is borne aloft by the raptures of everlasting Truth; he sings the almighty Spirit through which the universe is alive, the Spirit whose throbbings are going incessantly from star to star. The style is at once classical and romantic—classical in its restrained pathos and in the skilful architecture of the composition—and romantic in the wild strength of the image, in the tenderness of feeling.

With Carducci the full romantic moon narrows to a thin crescent; he is classic in ideal and form. His conception of life is rather wavering and shallow; yet, sometimes, he catches a faint echo of the harmony of the universe, and he dreams of hope and love. “Do I enter universal life or does the universe draw me into itself?—Ah, what I felt was a note of the eternal poem,—and now it is a tiny verse!”—“Hail, labouring human race!—All endures, and nothing can die.—Too much we suffered and despaired.—Love; the world is beautiful, and holy the future.” He was an agnostic; yet there is a chiming of vesper bells in one of his finest and latest odes, *Alla Chiesa di Polenta*. Deep was his feeling of nature; I quote the landscape in the opening lines of the *Ode to the Clitumnus*, which admirably convey the fragrant freshness of woods around a source, at evening.* He shares with some English

* “Still from the mountain—that waves with dusky ash trees murmuring to the wind,—and sheds far away the freshness of its sages and thymes,—still the flocks of sheep come down to you, O Clitumnus,—in the dank vesper-time, . . .”

poet, as Tennyson, the gift of vividly suggesting a scene in a few lines with suggestive touches.

Carducci used a great variety of lyric metres; in his *Odi Barbare* he renewed the experiment—already tried in the sixteenth century in Italy, and in England, where Thomas Campion, as it may be seen in his fine sapphic ode *To Laura*, left beautiful examples of it—of adapting classical prosody (i.e., a prosody based on syllabic quantity and not on mere stress, and, naturally, discarding rhyme) to the Italian language. Therefore his lines, though carefully and vigorously chiselled, not seldom appear twisted and tortured—inevitably, one might say—owing to the fact that the poet wanted to shape on a Greek and Latin mould the metal of a Romance tongue. He also often appears artificial; the rhythm must come new each time from within; here it is forced on the subject from outside; and the line, which ought to be flexible and yielding to every breath of inspiration, is cast stiff and hard into a rigid predetermined shape. Now and then, however, a fine result is achieved, as it may be easily perceived in the asclepiadean ode entitled *In a Gothic Cathedral*, where a wonderful effect is obtained by means of the quick time of the metre, suggesting the slenderness and soaring flight of the lofty, numberless pillars.* Likewise a classical landscape is sometimes very happily evoked through a clever employment of these metrical forms.† Carducci's poetry just receives the last beam of the classical school, of the classic world, but the ray is very intense and glowing bright.

Carducci voiced the noble aspirations of Italy towards independence and freedom from the foreign yoke. He

* “Sorgono e in agili file dilungano
gli immani ed ardui steli marmorei,
e nella tenebra sacra somigliano
di giganti un esercito.”

† “And the temples, arduous on the hill-tops,
Are flashing with a Parian whiteness in the rosy sunset,
And the cypresses on the seashore are quivering,
And the thick myrtle-trees are spreading a balmy fragrance.”

sang—as in the beautiful ode, *Cadore*—our struggles against Austria; he glorified our battles on the Lombard and Venetian fields; he chanted the Italian glories, going back to Roman grandeur; and he aimed at the enemies of his country the sharp arrows of his *Giambi ed Epodi*. History was to him a great source of inspiration, as it appears, for instance, in the ode *To Eugene Napoleon*, where he shows the working of a secret Nemesis in the Hapsburg family.

While in D'Annunzio's verse* the attraction of the senses is continually present, hardly a touch of earthiness comes into Fogazzaro's lines, passion being always expressed with a fine restraint. His poems—especially those of his later years, such as *Night of Passion* and *Samarith of Gaulan*—show us a mystical view of life and love. His lyrics—as well as his novels—are the songs of a heart seeking love not only through life, but beyond the door of death. "Usque dum vivam, et ultra," as he himself says in a fine chapter of *Daniele Cortis*. He relates in his poems his spiritual experiences, his inward struggles; they are a series of variations on a single theme, a theme which is never distinctly heard, never clearly uttered, though it dominates his whole work—the theme of the victory of duty and purity on passion and unlawful love. Like Wordsworth, he feels a mystic presence in nature, and his verse on woods and hills and lakes has the chaste and penetrating fragrance of cyclamens, the morning icy freshness and clearness of mountain water. The religious ardour of his mind and heart is always glowing in his poems, which, in spite of some technical weakness, have a hidden power that shall make them for ever loved and enduring.

No trace of D'Annunzio's æstheticism is to be found in Pascoli, who always liked the simple life of the fields and country people. There is in him an intense nature feeling, expressed in the Vergilian calm of the *Poemetti* and—with admirable conciseness of form—in the lyrical sketches of *Myricæ*; and, hand in hand with it, there go a romantic pathos and a wonderful intuitive power in grasping the soul

* For the poetical work of D'Annunzio see THE POETRY REVIEW, March, 1927.

itself of a landscape ; so that his impressions of a natural scene are " an instant made eternity." His technique is a kind of impressionism, things and people being seen—as in coloured woodcuts—only in neat and sharp outlines, and tints without nuances or subtle shades.

There is something irrevocable in the first outburst of song. Just think of Swinburne's *Atalanta in Calydon* ; the singer of *Songs Before Sunrise* and of *Tristram of Lyonesse*—or, if you want to observe him in the same field of Greek drama, of *Erechtheus*—never reached again the magnificent power of his early work. It is the same with Pascoli, who never attained again the delightful, spontaneous freshness of *Myrica*. He appeared very original in this book, and he was so, because he was, above all, sincere. We are struck by the extreme precision of these tiny pictures ; but he wants the final touch to make his painting really great poetry—the final touch, that is, in his case, the humanising of nature. Think of Keats's figure of the moon :

the coy moon, when in the waviness
Of whitest clouds she does her beauty dress ;

Pascoli would perhaps have gone as far as " the waviness of whitest clouds," but the epithet "coy" is beyond his reach.

His subsequent poems, also deeply instinct with love of nature, are somewhat alike D'Annunzio's nature poems, which they indeed equal, and sometimes surpass, in intensity of feeling.

His soul was calm and serene : a limpid night all alive with a shudder of stars. There is a deep religious under-current in his poetry ; and now and again it shows clearly, as in the beautiful poem, *La Buona Novella* (*The Good Tidings*), the announcement of spiritual freedom coming from Galilee to the dying gladiator in Rome, the "good news" of the light of the Cross spreading over the world in the Christmas night and setting it free from the thralldom of the nether powers and the slavery of sin.

Among the other poets of this period, Arthur Graf—a follower of Leopardi and Baudelaire in his early, and his best, work—was lost in the dark forest of doubt and

agnosticism. He, too, instead of looking heavenwards, was roving in unfathomable crypts. The chief note in his poetry is one of sorrow, though in his later work a slip of spiritual dawn is greening at the far horizon. Very beautiful, in its long wailing notes, is his lyric on Schubert's *Serenade*, of which I quote the close* as a specimen of his poetical power.

Antonio Della Porta based his technique on the Italian poets of the fourteenth century; his *Sestine* show him a perfect master, with supreme force and grace, of one of the most difficult metres; another very hard metrical form—a kind of “sirventese”—quatrains of endecasyllabics ending with the same rhyme—he treats with rare power in his sombre and magnificent poem of *Guidon Selvaggio*†. Antonio Della Porta would probably not have written his *Canzoni* and *Sestine* but for D’Annunzio’s *Isotteo* and *Chimaera*. Probably not; and yet his nervous, vigorous form is original, as he looks at our primitive lyrists in a different way from D’Annunzio’s, and his bronze statues have a truly personal, unmistakable cast.

Of Giovanni Marradi, the Leghorn poet, we may notice as especially remarkable the sonnets on the essence and aim of poetry; he is fighting against D’Annunzio’s theory of “Art for Art’s sake”—that is, he argues whether verbal

- * “Di lontan, di lontan, per la tranquilla
immensità ne vien sommormorando un canto.
Anelante d’affanno, ebbra di pianto,
la lunga nota nel silenzio oscilla.”

“From afar, from afar, through the still
immensity—there comes in low murmurings a song.—
Panting with grief, drunk with tears,—the long
note is slowly swinging in the silence.”

- † “Guidon Selvaggio . . .
Spesso vidi io correre sua ventura
triste in sembiante; l’ideal statura
premeva di sgomento e di paura
l’anime basse, in questa etade oscura.”

“Guidon Selvaggio . . . I often saw run in the venturous list of
life,—sad in his countenance;—his ideal stature crushed down with dis-
may and dread—the low souls, in this obscure age.”

beauty is the only thing required in poetry ; and he objects : " If a deep and sincere thought does not accompany beautiful sounds, is a poem worthy of the name ? " He makes D'Annunzio say : " O Poet, the word is divine ;—Heaven has set all our delight in pure Beauty ;—and the beautiful verse is all." " No," Marradi answers, " the verse is not all when it does not fly on the wings of a lofty idea ;—the flower of the word has no fragrance, when it is not shed by the secret soul ;—in vain does the poet slake his thirst at the clear brooks of song with open throat,—if he makes of himself an ascetic of a lonely, inanimate Beauty."

The lyrics of Giovanni Cena in *Mother, In Umbra, Ecce Homo*, are like dark etchings of scenes of poverty and pain. He is, in the main, a follower of Pascoli in his simple realism and pathos and in his feeling of nature ; nevertheless, in his first booklet, dedicated to the memory of his mother, *Madre*, he has left us some very original and powerful poems, which shall always be remembered with praise in our literary histories. While Cena is sometimes harsh and strident in his lines, Francesco Pastonchi, a follower of D'Annunzio, shows an exquisite musicality and sweetness in his sonnets in *La Giostra d'Amore* (*The Joust of Love*) and in his sun-suffused poems on natural loveliness and magic. The realism of Guido Gozzano stands apart ; he died young, in India, and left a small bunch of lyric flowers ; but his scanty crop is highly original, and full of an intense pathos through which is running a subtle vein of irony.

We are now afflicted—though in a lesser degree than a few years before—by the extravagances, caprices and grimaces of Futurism—that misshapen birth of French Impressionism. The Futurist school responds—in a way—to the appeal of the crowd, to the craving for violent, rapidly changing sensations, with its restlessness of mood and feverish colours. These singers draw their effects—as Rimbaud and Laforgue, and especially the former, did before—from the shock of distant and unexpected sensations, emotions, images ; they only want Rimbaud's

genius to strike the right—though unusual—chord. The rapid successions of images in their poems are like swift “arpeggios” of discordant notes ; therefore they do not melt into a melody, into a central gem ; their notes remain detached, in sharp contrast to each other, as a string of strange, stridently coloured beads. As their brothers in painting, the Cubists, they make caricatures instead of portraits. Yet there are some living sparks in the darkness, as in the poems of Gian Pietro Lucini, recently dead, in the *Aeroplanes* of Paolo Buzzi, in the *Enchanted Palaces* of Giovanni Cavicchioli, in the *Electric Poems* of Renato Govoni, and in the lyric improvisations of Aldo Palazzeschi. There is the diamond of a true poetical mind in some at least of these singers ; let us hope that it may kindle at the core and shine brightly when struck by the ray of a pure and sincere inspiration.

FEDERICO OLIVERO.

AFTER CHANGE

I SAID, “ I shall turn my back upon the old life
 With scarce a sigh ;
 It will not cost me vain regret or doubt
 To lay it by.
 As one who looks back on the road, at night, from the
 genial glow
 Of an inn door,
 So shall I look a moment, then let the old years go,
 And think of them no more.”
 Oh ! idle hope, that I with a blow might shatter,
 And bring to less
 Than a dream, time’s influence ! My heart has learned
 Its foolishness.
 For still, through the new and the strange, the shade of the
 once-known falls
 Across my track,
 And out of the silences that which is finished calls
 My troubled spirit back.

NANCY POLLOK.

TO SPAIN

MOTHER of poets, what a starry crown
Of song adorns thee, all the ages down !

They poets were, and are. With us they dwell
No less than in their fields of asphodel.

Berceo breathes once more upon his flute ;
Fray Luis touches his immortal lute ;

Lope still strikes his harp of a thousand strings ;
And Calderón his courtly measure brings ;

Still Espronceda plucks out love and pain
From his wild heart, and makes his songs again ;

Altars to God and Spain Zorilla rears ;
Campoamor scourges the world with sneers ;

'Mid clash of arms and the red rabble's shout
Nuñez de Arce forges faith in doubt.

Poor sorrowful Bécquer, lost in life's rough throng,
Finds in each bitter tear a crystal song ;

From Gabriel y Galán what music streams,
God, home, and pastoral joys his simple themes !

Across the sea float melodies that thrill,
From thy far sons, alien, but Spanish still.

Thy music is never mute. To-day is heard
In town and hamlet many a singing bird.

Marvellous Spain, Our Lady of Minstrelsy,
A lover of song offers this song to thee.

ELLA CROSBY-HEATH.

[Articles by Miss E. Crosby-Heath on the poets and
poetry of Spain appeared in THE POETRY REVIEW during
1925 and 1926.]

THE POETRY OF LEWIS SPENCE

MR. LEWIS SPENCE'S verse possesses that timeless quality which is found in all true poetry. Poetry which dates, which definitely becomes old-fashioned, is poetry which echoes the literary mood of the moment—and nothing more. The mood passed, the fashion changed, it is left high and dry, its colours faded like sea-weed on the beach at low tide. Much of the most glaringly modern verse is potentially old-fashioned—just as the aggressive moderns of the 'nineties now appear grotesque and out of date. That art alone remains young whose inspiration is deeper than mere mood. By this test some of our most recent poets are already senile, whilst the Elizabethan song-writers and Chaucer are fresh as when they wrote first. Much modern verse has a sort of galvanised vitality, but it is a little like the false vitality which follows the first effects of intoxication when a man appears to have increased his powers and later becomes maudlin and torpid. There are times when *Vers Libres* might perhaps, not inappropriately, be re-christened *Vers Ivres*.

Mr. Spence's work—as the best work always is—is both of and outside his age. It is coloured by this generation without being the dupe of its clichés. It strikes a curiously personal and yet detached note wrought out of a sort of white, controlled passion—the passion of a fighter in the midst of battle or that fire which drives a generous spirit to defend a lost cause. The verse so exquisitely fashioned may be compared to a scabbard of mediæval craftsmanship—a scabbard which, it must not be forgotten, holds a sword. To some it will come like a voice from their lost country to men in exile—something at the same familiar and remote. Such verse Thomas the Rhymer might have written in some new earthly incarnation after his sojourn in fairy-land. It is enchanted poetry,—inspired, one might almost say, by dis-enchantment,—for who, having known fairy-land, can ever be perfectly at ease in this world? About it hangs an atmosphere of solitary and noble beauty which consoles for the easy prettiness—the small coin of beauty—which is beauty's daily substitute. Much verse is

like writing on a slate which a sponge effaces—it is forgotten almost as soon as written. Poetry—the rarer kind—becomes a living part of the mind attuned to it, and these poems—to all who can respond—will surely remain as an enduring possession.

Mr. Spence is markedly national in nearly all he writes, —not with the pseudo-nationality of much dialect verse, which in the case of Scotsmen is often the equivalent of wearing a kilt in Princes Street. He is national in mind—a very different thing. To most people, Scottish verse begins and ends with Burns—but Burns' Muse (except when she was wholly herself) was very largely Anglicised and appears at times like a milk-maid moving stiffly in a hoop. Mr. Spence is far more akin to the older poets, Dunbar and Drummond and the ballad-mongers; he belongs to their more courteous and chivalrous age. There is no trace in all his poetry of that false romanticism which is the refuge of common-place minds—nor of extravagance or softness. The irony and wit which flash sharply through the sombre beauty of the verse keep it alert and sane. For all its sweetness as of honey and wine it has a salt sea savour. This is not sleepy poetry for Summer days; it is action turned to song. The silken webs cover sinews of steel. To see the silken covering *only* is to miss half its meaning. This perhaps is the great virtue of Mr. Spence's art—directness and point translated into magic; a mingling of the fighter and the poet, which is perhaps the rarest and most desirable of all. But after all the poet is his own best commentator; to talk about poetry is often to obscure it. Poetry can be safely left to find its destined readers—those who by temperament and mood are bound to respond. I will therefore quote a few of Mr. Spence's poems in full. The following, very characteristic, are full of atmosphere and point :

THE CARSE.

It is a thousand sunsets since I lay
In many-birded Gowrie, and did know
Its shadow for my soul, that passionate Tay
Out of my heart did flow.

The immortal hour the hate of time defies,
Men of my loins a million years away
Shall have the gloom of Gowrie in their eyes
And in their blood the Tay.

Bride or Handmaiden contains in a few words the whole of Mr. Spence's philosophy of poetry :

Beauty ever was designed
To thrill the heart and not the mind,
To speak to the immediate blood
But never to the pensive mood.

And when I hear one say that thought
Has been to him by Beauty brought,
I know that Beauty in his house
Has dwelt as handmaid, not as spouse.

And the three following poems show how perfectly and delicately Mr. Spence can fit expression to mood :

REST HARROW.

Out of the cells and street, to be
The breather of the turnpike hours,
The lord of lane, thethane of tree,
Gathering the village days like flowers.

To come at last to one calm place
Whose dials measure time by sleep,
A plunge of gardens dim with grace
Of sycamore shadows, valley-deep.

Some hamlet hollow which can hold
The gloaming like a tierce of wine,
Red rose of some white river's fold,
Smouldering where elfin waters twine.

There far from tides of thought and speech
To rest remote from time and toil,
The tenant of the thatching beech,
The franklin of a dreaming soil.

THE POETRY REVIEW

GREAT TAY OF THE WAVES.

O that yon river micht nae mair
 Rin through the channels o' my sleep,
 My bluid has felt its tides owre sair,
 Its waves hae drooned my dreams owre deep.

O why should Tay be a' my day
 And Buddon links be a' my nicht,
 The warld o' a' my waiks be gray
 Wi' yon far sands' unwarldly licht ?

As haars the windless water find
 The unguarded instant falls a prey
 To sakeless shadows o' the mind
 And a' my life rins back to Tay.

Deep in the saul the early scene—
 Ah ! let him play wi' suns wha can,
 The cradle's painted on the een,
 The native airt resolves the man.

IN MAY.

May mornings blossom now to greet
 The sun's white sandals in the street,
 From causeway-crown to window sills
 His footsteps fall like daffodils.

And privet hedges, spruce and quaint,
 Behind their bars of emerald paint
 Seem things of wild wood prisoned there,
 Crouching their cages in despair.

Pale hyacinths from the hollow lands
 Of Zuyder raise their waxen hands,
 As though some buried beauty strave
 To beckon lovers to her grave.

The maiden trees are talking silk,
 Cherries of pink, the thorn of milk,
 Like girls who, in a careless noon,
 Plot and conspire new robes for June.

And russet-velvet linnets spin
Through sun-pools with a golden din,
Singing of seeds and hidden foods
To feather-out their summer broods.

In all this tapestry of things,
Light and the leaf, desires and wings,
There lies a deeper joy than all
The painted hours of festival.

It is remarkable, is it not, to write so freshly about so much an exploited subject as May? The other poems in this collection (*The Plumes of Time*, George Allen and Unwin), are as good or better than these. One, *The Gray Etin*, written in Scots, is perhaps the most achieved poem of any produced in Scotland for many years.

MARGARET SACKVILLE.

SOME SHALL TOIL GREATLY . . .

COULD living but suffice!
The animal existence—peaceful sleep,
The pleasant taste of food, clean woodland air,
The slumbrous body warmed by sun or fire;
Sweet are these things and fair.
Yet we are fain to reap
A greater harvest, paying greater price.

O God! Why were we shod with wild desire,
Why did we glimpse a flash from hidden stars,
Why must we walk the Earth
Alone and restless down the unending years?
Her immemorial pain has dried our tears;
With eager hands, and helpless, still we try
To soothe the age-old agony that flows
Unheeded into space.
O unforgettable that ancient cry!
And not for us some shining sunlit place,
And holy peace.

.

The far wild starlight glows,
 And dreams may light our dearth. . . .
 Earth's travail felt but once may never cease
 For those who've heard the music of the spheres.

BARBARA E. SMYTHE.

HER PORTRAIT

NO words of mine could picture thee aright,
 NO Mother-heart of childlike winsomeness !
 The dear brown eyes, whose look was a caress,
 That danced at times with joyous inner light.
 Silver the crown above thy forehead white,
 Smoothed by an angel's wing, that paused to bless ;
 Thy lips dropped precious pearls of kindness,
 Or bravely smiled through e'en the darkest night.

Thy heart was as a garden fresh and fair,
 Where weary folk could rest, and children play :
 Music of hidden songbirds filled the air,
 And living fountains rose in rainbow spray ;
 While mid the scent of roses, sweet as prayer,
 The Lord Himself would walk at cool of day.

BERTHA M. SKEAT.

WRITTEN IN WINTER

THERE is no Winter in my thought of you ;
 No days of banished beauty, no defeat ;
 No barren fields where loveliness once grew ;
 No wasted garnering, or ruined wheat.
 Nothing is left to the ungentle blast ;
 Nothing forgot, or given to slow decay ;
 All the bright, coloured joys that lit the past
 Are my illumination of to-day.
 You, through my memory, live in lasting June,
 Full-hearted Summer, never slipping hence ;
 With you awakes a shy bird's drowsy tune,
 A country flower's meek magnificence.
 And Life itself seems part of your live breath ;
 It was not you I gave to wintry Death.

VERA I. ARLETT.

MODERN GREEK POETRY—II

RIGAS : VILLARAS : CHRISTOPOULOS

WE will deal now with the three first noteworthy poets whose activities coincide with the eve of the Rebirth of Greece. Differing from one another in character, they personify the different views and tendencies of their epoch. All three are of Northern Greek origin—the first hailed from Thessaly, the second was an Epirote, and the third a Macedonian. In different manners all three of them worked for the enlightenment of the enslaved nation, and sought to inspire the people with courage by means of translations of ancient works. The first amongst them was also the first martyr in the cause of modern Greek liberty.

This was RIGAS. As a general rule, I have no liking for long biographies of the poets and limit myself to such particulars as throw useful light upon their writings. Here, however, I must make an exception, for the life of the Thessalian bard, from the first moment of his appearance, is a poem in itself, beginning as an idyll, culminating in an insurrectionary war-chant and terminating like a mysterious dirge within the walls of the fortress of Belgrade. Further, it is so intimately bound up with the political history not only of Greece but of the whole Balkan peninsula that many details, which have only lately come to light, have all the appearance of recent events.

Rigas was born at Velestino and was in the habit of signing himself Velestinlis without the addition of any patronymic. The date of his birth, 1757, we glean from his own admission that in 1797 he was forty years old. He studied in the best Thessalian schools of the day and "was head of the village school at Kissos." In 1776 he went with Prince Nicholas Mavrogenis to Moldavia in the quality of secretary. Here he learned French and acted as interpreter to the French Consulate in Wallachia.

In 1790 at Vienna, he published the *Σχολεῖον τῶν ντελικάτων ἐραστῶν* (*School of Delicate Lovers*), a moral book containing "the curious adventures of the most lovely ladies of Paris." The title promises some drollery, but the author, or rather translator, disarms his critics with the

assurance that "the love affairs included in the present volume terminated in marriage, which is a holy mystery, and therefore let none gossip."

It might have been thought that Rigas was bent upon a fourth revival of the erotic novel in the history of Greek literature, and that his ambition was to follow in the footsteps of Tattius and Heliodorus, who wrote in the third century of the Christian era, Theodoros Prodromos and Nicetas Eugenianus of the twelfth century, and the anonymous erotic poets contemporary with the Frank dominion in the East.

But Rigas was destined to go down to fame as the Tyrtaeus of Modern Greece, and, as we shall see, he proved a far greater man. The echo of the French Revolution was then reverberating amidst the mountains of Hellas, and it entirely carried away the heart of the young Thessalian. Twenty years before the taking of the Bastille, when Rigas was yet a child, there had been an attempted rising in the Peloponnesus, but this movement had been largely due to the efforts of Russia. Now the Gospel of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity appeared to Rigas as a new revelation, and he conceived the vast idea of a general insurrection of all the inhabitants of the Turkish Empire, not excluding Mahomedans, against the Sultan's yoke, the most detestable of tyrannies mankind has ever known.

How Rigas thought to succeed in this uprising is clearly explained by his comrade and biographer, Perraivos. His means were all the possible means, beginning with the dissemination of songs, ending with the intervention of the sword. His first step was to publish books, maps, and pictures. Already in 1791 at Vienna he had printed an "Anthology of Physics," and in 1796 in order to publish his revolutionary books and propagate his ideas, he established himself in the Austrian capital, where there was a powerful Greek colony. There amongst other productions he printed 1,200 copies of a portrait of Alexander the Great, sold at 20 kreuzers apiece, and also his famous map, embracing the whole of the Balkan peninsula and bearing the ancient Greek place-names side by side with the modern.

Great was Rigas' industry, but the most difficult part of his task was to despatch his printed matter to Trieste, Smyrna, Preveza and other places, wherever indeed he could find secret agents to spread his ideas.

Rigas' second means was a secret insurrectionary society. We still possess, in fact, a list of its members for Yannina, Jassy, Bucharest, Patras, Constantinople and other cities. The poet himself presided over the clandestine meetings at Vienna. They were held at the house of the Chian doctor, Argentis, and it was there that, in September 1796 he first sang his famous *Θούριος* (*War-song*), composed to the tune of the *Marseillaise*.

ὥς πότε, παλικάρια, νά ζοῦμεν στὰ στενὰ
μονάχοι σὰν λιοντάρια, σταῖς ῥάχαις, στὰ βουνὰ
Νὰ χάνωμεν ἀδέλφια, πατρίδα καὶ γονεῖς
τοὺς φίλους, τὰ παιδιὰ μας καὶ ὅλους τοὺς συγγενεῖς,
Καλλιῶναι μιᾶς ὥρας ἐλεύθερη ζωὴ
παρὰ σαράντα χρόνοι σκλαβιὰ καὶ φυλακή

"How long, O my brave comrades, must we dwell in these fastnesses, solitary, like lions on the mountains? How long must forego the sight of brothers and home and parents, of friends and children and family! Yet better one hour of Freedom than forty years of slavery and bondage."

(*Translation of MR. CHROUSSAKIS.*)

The first lines of this war-song are certainly addressed to the *κλέφτες*, who had their strongholds in the mountains of Thessaly, the Epirus, and Macedonia. Others appeal to the Greeks who were serving as officers in the Moldavo-Wallachian and Russian armies.

As he warms to his theme the poet calls upon the Pasha of Widin, the Bulgarians, Albanians, Armenians, Maltese, Egyptians, and the Pasha of Aleppo to bring succour, form an alliance, and rise in rebellion. He was thus the first to advocate not a Balkan League—entitling him to rank as the forerunner of Tricoupis and Venizelos—but a confederation of all the peoples of what had once been the Byzantine East.

The Pasha of Widin, in whom he reposed such confidence, was his old friend Pezvanoglous, whose life he had at one

time saved. The Pasha had revolted and seized Widin, whilst his associates had possessed themselves of the greater part of Serbia. Rigas' war-song, both tune and words, was transmitted stealthily from mouth to mouth, as the Gospel had been amongst the early Christians. It stirred the nation to the depths, and came to be sung within the very walls of Constantinople. Curiously enough, the Turks themselves delighted to listen to the melody without understanding the sense. It goes without saying that the Bulgarians, Armenians and Egyptians paid no heed to it. But the Greeks were rallying round the society in daily increasing numbers, and Rigas turned to the Directorate, then at the head of affairs in Paris, to obtain the fulfilment of his aims.

In 1796 Bonaparte had burst into Italy, vanquishing the Austrians, and Rigas in order to attract his attention, had sent him a present of a snuff-box made of laurel-wood from the valley of Tempe. In June, 1797, a French general landed at Corfu, and issued a manifesto promising liberation to the inhabitants, who, he was astonished to find, had not forgotten their Hellenic origin. The members of the Society thoroughly delighted, begged for a definite *entente* with France.

Rigas drew up an insurrectionary proclamation embodying the future constitution of Greece upon the basis of the French law of 1793. To this he appended his war-song. In October 1797 he printed three thousand copies of this pamphlet, intending later to raise the number to seventy thousand.

The constitution bore the title, "New political government of the inhabitants of Rumelia, Asia Minor, the Mediterranean Islands and Wallacho-Boddania. Concerning the Laws and the Mother-country. Freedom, Equality, Fraternity." It consisted of 124 articles and included the following definition of the term "citizen": "He who speaks the common or Hellenic tongue and gives help to Greece, even though he may dwell in the antipodes (for the Greek leaven has been scattered throughout both hemispheres) is a Greek and a citizen." The flag was to be

a tricolor ; red, white and black. Thus the new Tyrtaeus had become also a Solon, and was on the high road to make himself a Thrasybulus.

After despatching John Mavrogenis to Paris to "make the necessary preparations for the republican government to be established in Greece," Rigas, accompanied by Perraivos, left Vienna with the intention of disembarking in the Peloponnesus. But, unfortunately, he had sent on before him to Trieste the boxes filled with his proclamations, and these were betrayed to the Austrian Prefect, who arrested both Rigas and Perraivos immediately upon their arrival in November 1797. Perraivos was subsequently released as a French subject, but Rigas returned a prisoner to Vienna.

For fear lest he might be forced to make revelations Rigas stabbed himself three times with a small knife. His life, however, was preserved and he was brought before the judges, together with other of his friends who had been apprehended. The *dossier* of the case was discovered (by Emile Legrand) in 1891, and contains the details of the examination of ten conspirators who were subjects of the Sublime Porte. Of these eight were found guilty, having at once admitted their sympathy for France and for Rigas. Three were Macedonians, two Chians, one an Epirote, one a Thessalian, and one a Cypriote. All were young. Argentis, who was thirty-one years of age, confessed that his house had been the rallying-place of the members of the secret society. Panayotis Emmanuel, aged 21, confessed his love for republicanism, due, he said, to his knowledge of the political system of ancient Greece. Demetrios Nicolaïdes owned having sung the *Marseillaise*. But the most undaunted of all was Rigas.

"At all times," he said to the judge, "I have longed for the liberation of Greece from the Turkish yoke, and, after the salvation of my soul, my first desire is to see the Turks driven out of Greece ; for I would rather be ruled over by the Devil than by a tyrant like the Turk."

The verdict was obvious. The prisoners were aiming at "the liberation of Greece." Crimes of this nature were

unpardonable, of course, in Austria ; but it is typical of the behaviour of the Austrian Government that they entered into lengthy negotiations with the Porte before delivering up Rigas and his companions, demanding as a set-off the surrender of certain Polish fugitives. When the bargain was settled the eight conspirators were handed over to the kaïmakam of Belgrade against receipt. In vain did the Greeks in Constantinople subscribe 300,000 piastres to save Rigas' life. According to the report of an Austrian colonel, the kaïmakam, three days after receiving the necessary *firman*, ordered the eight prisoners to be strangled, and, after the sentence had been carried out, spread the rumour that all had escaped. According to Perraivos, when the executioners entered Rigas' cell, he said to them in Turkish, " I have sown enough seed, and my kin will gather the fruit." This phrase, transmuted into an elegy, adorns his statue, which rises in front of the University of Athens.

It is difficult to picture a nobler figure than that of Rigas. His Greek heart caught and focused the radiations of the enthusiasm of France. Thus the poet was lifted to the height of a prophet. His purely poetic value is not great, as is ever the case with poets of his kind. Tyrtæus was no Pindar, and Rouget de l'Isle was not a Chénier. But the makers of warlike hymns must not be judged by the same measure as the poets of dreamy fantasies. It is useless to read their stanzas in the cold composure of the study or University lecture-hall. We must not require of them strict sequence of ideas or prosodic accuracy. But when we encourage the young to sing them, we see that they can work miracles, such as was the resurrection of Greece.

The second poet, JOHN VILLARAS, was also brought to the Venetian courts in his youth, before the arrest of Rigas. From his judicial *dossier*, recently brought to light, we gather considerable information about his early days, how with certain Ionian friends he frequented the Greek Café Florian, where he was ever extolling the French victories in Italy, and what was more dangerous, French ideas, main-

taining that all those who did not accept them were "both idiotic and ignorant." The upshot of the affair is unknown to us; but it is clear that Villaras endeavoured to suppress the truth and screen his companions. The documents come to a stop on March 27th, 1797, and on May 5th Bonaparte made his entry into Venice.

Villaras was then in Venice awaiting remittances to enable him to continue his medical studies at Padua. His father was also a doctor, an Epirote, who had studied in Italy and was acquainted with English. Young Villaras was quite encyclopædic in his learning, and interested not only in botany and pharmaceuticals, but also in literature and philosophy. After obtaining his medical diploma in 1801—he was then thirty—he returned to the Epirus and was received at the court of Ali Pasha, as physician to his son Veli Pasha. Here he was held in high honour for his knowledge, and a foreign traveller records admiration for his facility as a versifier.

At this time, it would appear, he composed a poem descriptive of the protracted wars of Ali Pasha against the Souliotes. But the court-physician was no longer the enthusiastic liberal student of his Venice days. The poem remained unpublished, but Solomos, who read it at Corfu, condemned it bitterly for exalting the achievements of a tyrant.

But the most remarkable feature of Villaras was his originality and eccentricity. In 1814 at Corfu he published his first book, *The Romaic Tongue with a little Advice upon its Writing and Spelling*. In this work he abolishes the letters *v* and *ω*, as well as all accents and double consonants. He also introduces the graphic element *8* (*ov*). The book embraced a translation of Plato's *Crito*, part of the second Book of Thucydides, and two Anacreontic poems. It contained in addition four original compositions, one of which τὸ Πουλάκι (*The Little Bird*) is perhaps his best lyric poem.

"Where shall I stay, little bird from afar, lost in strange lands, where shall I lodge? Where shall I rest and spend the night, else am I lost? The day wanes, darkness comes on; without a mate,

where shall I lodge ? Where shall I make my nest in the strange wood, else am I lost ?

“The day is flying away ; night compels every bird to repose. I, little bird, come from afar, sigh and call for my mate. I look at the many birds with mates around me ; such bliss no longer is mine. Night overwhelms me ; no mate awaits me, no kiss.”

(*Translation of MR. CHROUSSAKIS.*)

The simplification of spelling in any language is certainly no great revelation, especially when it is as radical as that attempted by Villaras ; but from letters of his, published lately, we can see how right he was in his perception of the vain labours of the archaists, although he was unable to see the vanity of his own orthographic scheme. We do not know how far he afterwards adhered to it. The poet was not fortunate in the end. He was sufficiently punished for his laudations of Ali Pasha. When in 1820 the Sultan's armies laid siege to Jannina, in order to capture the rebellious Pasha, Villaras' house was burned, his property destroyed and he himself only escaped with difficulty to a village in Zagori, where he died in extreme poverty on December 23rd, 1823.

Four years later (1827) a certain Petridis of Corfu published the complete works of Villaras “in order to bring some assistance to his widow.” This collection includes his charming version of the Homeric *Battle of the Frogs and Mice*, and also his Satires and the Fables, twenty in number.

The Satires are the most characteristic of Villaras' poems. They belong rather to the class of works which are called Characters. But they have neither the precision of Theophrastus's Characters, who studied the moral varieties of men as he did the species of plants, nor the lifelike brilliancy of some of the *Caractères* of La Bruyère. They are rather social caricatures. It was natural that the poet, returning home, and to the small society of Jannina, terrorised by Ali Pasha, after he had known larger towns and more educated people in Italy, should distinguish all the defects and shortcomings of his fellow-countrymen. So he thought that poetry would act as a good medicine. He begins with four lines running as follows :—

Σάτυρος εἶμαι · σ' ὅλα γελάω. I am a Satyr ; I laugh at everything.
 Τόν ἴδιο Μῶμο δέν τόν ψηφάω. I respect not even Momus himself.
 Μακροῦθε στίακα · μήμε πηράξης Stay aloof ; do not provoke me.
 Τίσε δαγκάνω καί θά φωνάξης. I shall bite you and you will cry.

A long satire follows, which can be compared with some Epigrams of Palladas; it is evident that Villaras wrote in order to revenge himself; some of his portraits prove that Villaras wrote them rather from love of fun, like Alexander Pope, but the series taken as a whole shows that he had a moral aim, just as in his *Fables*. The miser, the liar, the puffed up man, the envious, the glutton, the fop, the gossip, the babbler, the busybody, the constant laugher, the wiseacre, the dullard, the drunkard—are skillfully sketched. Especially successful is Villaras in two types of his epoch, viz., the pedant and the doctor. He represents a Greek scholar calling the Muses to his help. “They were asleep and rose in alarm at his cries; they came forth one after another; but when they saw that he is as a Midas, they laughed and went in again.”

But Villaras makes a special butt of his medical colleague. In the *ιατροσυμβούλιον* (*Consultation of Doctors*) he represents four doctors having four opinions and proposing four different cures. The patient was saved by his irritation at their long-winded speeches; he broke into a perspiration and then slept peacefully.

The *Fables* also have didactic purpose. In his prologue Villaras says:—“I narrate tales, I select fables, I embellish liars as well as I can, and thus I tell the truth.”

Most of the *Fables* are, of course, derived from Aesop. The best of them, however, “The Cat and the Mirror,” is not; it depicts a cat trying in vain to discover who his reflection is and at last giving it up as a bad job and running off to catch more mice. The description of the movements and the astonishment of the cat is delightful. But the originality of Villaras’ fables lies rather in the morals; from the fable of the cat he concludes that even the philosophers must consider some problems beyond human attainment. Sometimes he gives two and three morals, trying to inspire his readers with virtues and even courage.

A certain social philosophy gives a depth to his fables, but sometimes seems over practical and prosaic.

Villaras has a humour of his own, inseparably bound up with his own Epirotic dialect, of which he was a master. He always uses ὄχ (έκ) instead of ἀπ(ὸ). Thus he will survive by his vocabulary, the compounds of his own invention and his over progressive philological ideas. Still more, he was a master of verse. The variety of his metres was unprecedented in modern Greek; there are no superfluous words, hiatus is very rare, and rhyme is rich. If he was not a great poet, he was a strong pioneer.

Still more encyclopædic and more versatile than Villaras was ATHANASIOS CHRISTOPOULOS, his junior by one year. Born in Castoria in 1772, he studied the classics at Bucarest and then medicine at Bouda-Pest and afterwards at Padua. But he was also interested in sciences, especially chemistry and astronomy. After returning to Bucarest, he became teacher at the Court of Prince Mourousis and took a lively part in the famous linguistic question. Fortunately he did not invent a new spelling, like Villaras, but he wrote a Grammar of his own, Γραμματικὴ τῆς Αἰολοδωρικῆς (*Grammar of Aeolodoric*), which he published at Vienna in 1805, with a drama, Ἀχιλλεύς (*Achilles*). He himself was also a partisan of the vernacular, but not as extreme as Villaras.

But Prince Mourousis was deposed and Christopoulos came with him to Constantinople and lived with him in his villa at Therapia. Here he came to a closer contact with the Phanariot society—which we will meet later—and he was introduced into the *salons*, where so many graceful ladies were conspicuous by their education. Christopoulos wrote verses in their honour. Before him, erotic poetry in Constantinople was left in the rude hands of Dragoumanakis, Jacoumis, Lampadarios and others still worse, who expressed a Turkish sentimentality, using many Turkish words. Therefore Christopoulos's verses, introducing the ancient deities, the Muses, the Graces, Zeus, Leda, Aphrodite and especially Bacchus and Eros, appeared perfectly delightful. They were sung, printed at Vienna in

1811, and reprinted for the second time at Corfu in 1814, and then at Athens. (This was the first book printed at Athens before the revolution.) We have no time to follow Christopoulos in his other works. In Mourousis' library he began to compile a lexicon, but he reached only the letter H, because his patron was decapitated (such episodes were only too common under the Sublime Porte), and the poet was obliged to fly to Wallachia. There he was appointed a judge by Prince Karatza and became also the legislator of the Principalities—that is to say, he wrote the Code, which was put into force in 1815. This work met with great praise from Zacharia von Lingenthal, but it has lately been proved to be an adaptation of the Austrian law.

After the liberation of Greece he wrote Πολιτικά Παράλληλα (Paris, 1833) and came to live at Nauplia. But the courtier found no great pleasure in democracy, and so he left the country and died at a great age in 1847.

His poems, however, are not yet forgotten. They are still sung at banquets, some of them to his own tunes, and were praised not only by his admirer Rangabé and many foreigners, but also by Bernardakis and Roïdes.

But nobody has realised that many of them are simple adaptations of ancient Anacreontics: for instance, his *Canary Bird*, is the old *πέλεια* (pigeon) and his *κώνωπας* (mosquito) is Meleagrus' *κώνωπες* (*Ἀνθολογίας* V. 150). His *πόθος* (desire) is also an imitation of the ancient *συμποσιακόν*, 22.

Undoubtedly Christopoulos was an eminent person of his period, not only by his dexterity—which reminds us of Simonides—but also by his various studies in many branches of knowledge. In this he followed the French encyclopædists. But his poetry, for which his name was celebrated, was neither original nor suited to his times.

Christopoulos was too much of a diplomatist and a lawyer to be a great poet. The *δόμενες* (the ladies) wanted flattery and verses; and so Christopoulos, the encyclopædist, opened his Anthology, his Bucolics and the Anacreontics and made easy adaptations from them. Of course, he seldom improved upon his models. Wilamowitz-

Moellendorff has called all the Anacreontics of the Roman and Byzantine periods not wine, but lemonade. Christopoulos made his lemonade too sugary.

Christopoulos was compared to Persian poets. As a fact, he displayed oriental voluptuousness in his *Βακχικά*; but even that was not sincere. For instance, his *κατάρα* (Curse) is so extravagant that it cannot be true.

His chief merit, I think, was this: that he taught the readers of his time a new lesson, namely, that books are not necessarily heavy stuff, destined for the hands of teachers and priests alone, but that there are some charming books appealing to youth of both sexes.

Christopoulos and Villaras dealt heavy blows at the pedantry of their time. From this point of view they contributed to the intellectual emancipation of their race. But far more successful in that was the older rhapsodist, who, lesser poet but greater man, fell a martyr to his noble ideas.

SIMOS MENARDOS.

LATELY KNOWN

ANEMONES still pry and peer
With wondering eye and vision clear;
Dear heart of Earth how hast thou hung
So long in space and kept so young?

The roots of moss smell rich like wine
Of vintage finer than the vine;
Dear heart of Earth how can it be
Time-'wildered sense revives through thee?

White-pinafores a little group
Of children after hay carts troop;
Dear heart of Earth how canst thou yield
Such store of sweetness in one field?

ROSA HOBHOUSE.

AFTER AN EARTHQUAKE

A SURVIVOR SOLILOQUISES

WE know the fire—times without end
It comes to us in kindly guise
Since first the savage, lowly wise,
Woody it to be man's slave and friend.
And if sometimes the friend betrays,
The ally fails, the slave rebels,
Still back to bounds the man compels ;
He handles fire and knows its ways.

Water we know—to copse and croft
When earth lies fevered, gasping dumb,
How kind and cool the showers come
From airy reservoirs aloft !
The limpid spring, the desert well,
Beauty and succour brightly spell.
And if sometimes the saviour turn
Destroyer ; if each slender burn,
Swelled by its wrath into a flood,
Vexes the river's angry mood,
Till raging down in headlong force
It scatters ruin through its course,
Still man is man—and he can learn ;
He has shrewd craft to circumvent
The water's ways ; his bridges spurn
Its furious bulk ; its power pent
In his " Thus far " expressed in stone,
Fawns on the master it must own.
So, armed as to what dangers lurk,
Man makes the wayward torrents work ;
In mill and mine they do their task
Subdued to all that man may ask.

We know the lightning ; formerly
A dragon regnant in the sky,
To-day it bears man's word afar
And meekly draws his pleasure car.
We know the wind, we know the sun,
Our benefactors both. If one

By its wild death dance terrify,
If neath the other's kisses lie,
Midst all the sweetness of the spring,
Unspeaking, spent, some stricken thing ;
Still Wisdom watching through the years
Informs us and allays our fears.

But this ! But this ! an ambushed foe,
An unknown might, a Titan rage,
That gathers head when none can know,
And strikes in power no man can gauge.
But this ! But this ! a palsied earth,
A mischief in the molten deeps,
A crouching violence that leaps
And grips in sleep, or prayer, or mirth.
The usufruct of patient years,
The priceless treasures of the mind
The demon in its frenzy tears,
And havoc leaves, and woe, behind.

In the black matrix of the earth
What monstrous concept grows to birth,
What influence shapes, what term is set,
Seem past the guess of science yet.
So peaceful to his rest man goes,
But wakes to feel the sound globe rock,
Himself amid her anguished throes
A helpless toy—a shuttlecock.
Instead of lord, he seems the mock
Of fiends invisible, in glee
At his extreme of misery.
The dead, the dying, the dismayed,
That piteous thing, a child afraid,
The terror of dumb beasts, he sees,
And mad suspense where'er he flees.

What valour, what philosophy
Shall brace us for the cataclysm ?
What voice of dogged faith shall cry ?
What comfort rise from this abysm ?

Teachers of old time bade us scan
A finished home, prepared for man ;
The huge beasts gone, an atmosphere,
A soil to rear his crops, and near
A Father-God to guard and guide,
Pleased with his work and satisfied.

Alas ! with older, sadder eyes
To-day we view things otherwise.
Man sees himself a guest compelled,
Or even as a prisoner held,
His host unknown, or partly known,
And all the half-built lodging sown
With perils. Who then shall he charge
With bad housewifery in the large ?

Man sees, at cost, throughout her girth
The slow adjustments of the earth.
He sees himself no favoured soul,
A casual item of the whole,
Condemned to fight in chill dismay
Each inch of progress on his way.
He sees himself, as see he must,
A dweller on a fragile crust.
What war of gases in the round,
What gathering for a fierce rebound,
How wields the hidden Alchemist
Prodigious forces that resist,
How long, in spite of all his pains,
His grasp and tenure of the reins ;
What worse catastrophe may come ?
These questions find the wisest dumb.

We know but this ; to-day we thrive ;
Next dawn a city half-alive,
Buried in wreck, consumed by flame,
Broods on the way the horror came.
The towering chimneys of the globe
Belch flame and smoke and spread a robe
Of burial on the smiling slopes,

A ruthless holocaust of hopes.
 Or earth is seized by ague fits,
 And "terra firma," quoted once
 In earnest, figures for the nonce
 A jocose fiction of the wits.

A "fault" ? A slip ? the cooling earth ?
 Maybe—but is man nothing worth ?
 Fair play, a chance to save, a word
 Of warning, had we these ? We gird
 Ourselves for many tests ; we brace
 Our minds for hardship, war, disease ;
 There's courage for a foe one sees,
 But thugs in darkness who can face ?

We cannot worship, cannot pray.
 Too hard that olden "though He slay,"
 As yet—as yet—for human strength.
 Our faith may rally, rise, at length,
 But now the desperate "I was dumb,"
 I opened not my mouth," *will* come !
 God seems indifferent, estranged.
 Our hopes are wrecked, our lives are changed.
 We walk henceforth with memories
 No future joy can ostracise.
 The shadow of abiding fear
 Broods over all things sweet and dear.
 Withdrawn in stress of sharp alarms
 Must seem the Everlasting Arms.
 God gives His angels charge no more—
 A figment that of Psalmist lore.
 His breast ? the hollow of His hand ?
 Oh no ! we're exiled— orphaned—banned.

"Thou did'st it." Not in sport—in hate,
 Not in indifference ; we must feel
 This much, to live. Old bases reel.
 Stunned, apathetic, sad—we wait.

JULIA BOYNTON GREEN.

A COMMON STORY

THEY said :

Vainly you yearn after far impossible beauty ;
The natural gift of children will bring you peace
As grey and cool as shaded waters at even.
So they told me.

Children came.

Through the turmoil of the speeding years
I toiled for them,
Grew old and worn for them,
Bartered those jewels of my youth and beauty
That for the price they might grow lovelier :
Gave all
That so they should swing into life's loud battle
Invulnerably armed, beautifully winged.

The years sped :

Now they are grown, and now I know
Mine is the old, old story.

I sit alone.

Life calls to them—alluring, vivid, compelling—
My hand upon them is no more

Than a dry twig

Snapped and fallen from the withered branch.

I am the drab old Mother,

Knowing nothing—fit only to darn and cook and mend :
For these, and a mild, pitying contempt.

But they, ah they have Life to live !

They are gone from me.

Now in the large hush of the creeping twilight

I pause and ponder :

Think of their words those many years ago,

Of the hopes that now

Are crumbled into a little choking dust,

Of the dreams become faint, wistful ghosts

That I shall never gather proudly to my arms.

And I laugh—for what I hoped to be,

To do,

And what I am.

Laugh, looking at my hands filled only with dust ;
 At my life, no more than a thin frayed cotton—
 The tacking thread pulled from a finished garment
 That garment, my children !

And I wonder if they who are so proudly confident
 Will repeat the tale,
 Wither and fade,
 And by their children be cast aside
 With the worn-out things of yesterday :
 Like me
 Sit greyly in a bitter night, asking
 If they who tend the rose shall always have for keeping
 Only the prick of its thorn ?

D. F. RADFORD.

NO LUCK !

NO luck ? No, hardly a bite to-day.
 But I hooked the flash of the leaping spray
 And netted the glint as the long waves roared
 Over the weed-girt ledge and poured
 In foaming rills down the smooth black rock.
 I shook to the quiver of every shock,
 As if the hands of *maestro* Sea
 Were crashing symphonic chords on me.
 The salt-cool draught that the south wind bore
 Steeped through my lungs to the inmost core
 Of being, and with a throb my soul,
 Expanding, was one with the silver bowl
 Of the open Atlantic, dawn-caressed ;
 While a schooner swam on my tossing breast
 As light as a sliding bubble of foam ;
 And the tattered splendour of clouds above
 Was not too vast for my arms of love.—
 Then the good hour passed and my feet turned home.
 No luck at all ? Well, yes, in a way
 No luck at all's what I ought to say.

CHARLES WHARTON STORK.

TOYS OF THE SPIRIT

THE publishing of such a book as *Childhood in Verse and Prose* (Susan Miles. Oxford University Press) is one of the many signs of the awakened widespread interest of the twentieth century in childhood. This interest will, in the long run, affect the grown-up no less than the child. The sympathetic insight of a generation which has evolved so joyous a thing as "The Play Way" in education, and which has so realised the truth of "Curiosity in a child is a natural tendency, and is, as it were, teaching's herald," as to make of the perpetual "Why?" of a child a stepping-stone to its development, cannot fail to embark on some "thought-adventuring," to discover yet more clearly the meaning of childhood.

Childhood is not merely a more or less tiresome preliminary to manhood or womanhood, as certain shibboleths of the past would suggest—shibboleths summed up in "A child should be seen and not heard"; nor is childhood so overwhelmingly more important than maturity that all the energies of mankind should be devoted to its service to the overshadowing of duty of service to people in a later stage of life, as present-day enthusiasts would have the world believe. Such enthusiasts overlook the fact that impressionability in a child carries with it a certain elasticity as its complement, so that impressions made on a child from without are not usually lasting unless they are met by a latent potentiality within the child. This is so, even of so powerful a thing as fear. Alice Meynell, with an insight disciplined by appeal to facts, wrote :

The appeal to fear may possibly hurt a child; nevertheless it oftener fails to hurt him. If he is prone to fears, he will be helpless under their grasp without the hint of human tales. The night will threaten him, the shadow will pursue, the dream will catch him, terror itself will have him by the heart. And terror, having made his pulses leap, knows how to use any thought, any shape, any image, to account to the child's mind for the flight and tempest of his blood.

The sole importance of childhood lies in its latent possibilities. It is a strange mixture of the outward and

visible disabilities of childishness, combined with an inward and spiritual grace, usually suggested by the word childlikeness. The childishness, along with the physical immaturity, must disappear; the childlikeness, engendered not by immaturity of body but by impressionability of mind, must be retained if advancing years are to bring no doom.

It is this grace of childlikeness found always in the young child, but so rarely in the adult, which is proving so attractive at the present time to a generation weary of strife and striving to recover the simplicity of fundamentals from a welter of seemingly conflicting imperatives. The adult is turning to the child with an interest born of need. From the unconscious, unproved plasticity of mind of the child the man discovers must be developed a trained awareness, a retaining of plasticity in order that nothing may knock at his heart in vain, but a tempering of its natural consequences by the exercise of conscious judgment.

The measure of childhood is freedom of spirit. "With the uncovenanted ways of a child you keep no tryst." The unformulated principle of a young child is, "I am the centre of my universe; nothing is of consequence except in so far as it affects me." Lottie, in Katherine Mansfield's story *In the Washhouse*, with round-eyed excitement saying, "Mine?" "To keep?" when, while having a card game explained to her, she is told a certain card will be hers under certain circumstances, is an example of a child's engrossment with its own self, and there are many such examples. All the imaginings of a child go to feed its insatiable desire for power over circumstances and experience. He is a being "Moving about in worlds not realised," and to still his "blank misgivings" must, through play, make his environment subject to his self.

He must season mundane food with dreams that it be "heavenly manna" to him for a week; he must make out of a tub a fortified town, that he may, by besieging it, taste the fruits of glory; he must turn pumpkins into coaches, and "mice into horses," that the ball may minister to his enjoyment.

The measure of the grown man who would retain the

grace of childlikeness must likewise be freedom of spirit—his law “The mind is its own place and of itself can make a hell of heaven, a heaven of hell.” The basis of his law will be likewise self-interest, but it must be self-interest sublimated through obedience to the higher law which says, “Ye are members one of another,” and “called to be saints.”

He must season food with dreams that it may be the Bread of Life ; his tub, like that of Diogenes, must be his dwelling-place, his outward circumstances, to be besieged from within in desperate self-defence lest they overwhelm him ; his pumpkins must be turned into coaches that the ball may take place at all.

Nevertheless, the mainspring of the power which transmutes the actual into the ministering ideal will be the same, fundamentally, in the grown-up and the child ; it is an inward compulsion, subjecting material things to the needs of a growing entity. Under the compulsion of spiritual need, the things of the universe will be the toys of the growing spirit of the childlike man, just as under the compulsion of inexperience and immaturity the child is “pleas’d with a whistle, tickled by a straw.”

The idea that the things of this world are as toys to mankind is no new one. G. K. Chesterton, in *The Ancient of Days*, writes :

A child sits in a sunny place
Too happy for a smile,
And plays through one long holiday
With balls to roll and pile ;
A painted windmill by his side
Runs like a merry tune,
But the sails are the four great winds of heaven,
And the balls are the sun and moon.

A staring doll’s house shows to him
Green floors and starry rafter,
And many coloured graven dolls
Live for his lovely laughter.
The dolls have crowns and aureoles,
Helmets and horns and wings,

For they are the saints and seraphim,
The prophets and the kings.

The man, no less than the child, moves about in a world not realised, a spiritual world, and while spiritual truths remain paradoxes, spiritual experience must be, to a certain extent, vicarious. Man plays hide-and-seek with truth (is not this another way of saying that truth is relative ?) and there is no lack of cover. "Turn but a stone and start a wing," a modern saint has said, and in essence this is the same as the child's "Dress up a peg and call it a doll."

Through the ages, poets and painters, sculptors and story weavers, have been showing to the world the possibilities of experience in these ubiquitous hiding-places of the spirit, toys of the childlike soul.

To dip, as it were, haphazard into the playbox is to remember how Shelley has uncovered far-off things, toys fit for the young gods in the "nurseries of heaven," lightning for a slave, the stars of heaven's utmost deeps to number, the tempest for a steed ; is to remember Padraic Pearse, by an exactly worded phrase, giving, as it were, a new coat of paint to a treasure so well worn as to be almost overlooked, by his

Little rabbits in a field at evening
Lit by a slanting sun

Or children with bare feet upon the sands
Of some ebbcd sea ;

is to remember Rodin giving a clue to the possibilities of inevitable makeshifts, by showing beauty only half freed from the rough, as it were, Aphrodite only half risen from the foam ; is to remember Fra Angelico providing quiet, absorbing occupation for recuperative hours, by his flowery bowery angel broods ; is to remember Flecker giving to Keats' "magic casements" the added attraction of "the dragon green, the luminous, the serpent haunted sea." The supply of provision for man's needs is never-failing, for

There is not a month when the gold of the sun and the silver

of the moon are not woven, when the rose of sunset does not lie upon the hills which reddened to the rose of dawn, when the rainbow is not let loose from the tangled nets of rain and wind, when the morning star and the evening star do not rise and set.

LAURA C. FARNELL.

BEDTIME

BREAK the last coal, and let it leap
 In spiring flames of red ;
 Woo the warm twilight mood of sleep—
 And then, to bed.

Quietly, at the close of day,
 The heart-flame finds release ;
 Calm thoughts in wordless silence pray,
 And end in peace.

And ere we face the chill of death
 A last watch let us keep ;
 A little while draw peaceful breath,
 Then fall on sleep.

W. HANDLEY JONES.

RESURGENCE

WHY should I walk this winter avenue
 Shadowy-blue beneath the desolate sky,
 Shaping my bitter longing to a cry ?
 Under the snow the meadow-mist and rue
 Are somewhere steeped in dreams. Spring will renew
 The dancing daffodils ; and jonquils, white
 As ocean foam, somehow will burgeon through
 And blow cool-silver trumpets in the night.

Why should my heart hold ghostly carnival
 With pain ? This bitter longing with no name
 Make dreary dissonance within my soul . . . ?
 As out of the winter silence April flame
 Wakens in bud and flower along the wall
 My heart will blossom again and be made whole.

VERNE BRIGHT.

THE CREOLE POETRY OF WEST AFRICA

POETRY reaches its highest development in rhythm, grace, beauty and technique when there is culture, life-long civilisation, behind its creative force. As the culture of the national or racial mind develops, its poetic instincts gain in intensity and perfection of expression.

This is standardised, technical form. Unless a race develops its own technical basis, like Omar Khayyám's *Rubáiyát*, or Shakespeare's Sonnets, or produces an imperfect imitation of another, it is not recognised as a poetic race, however rich its vocabulary may be in metaphors, synonyms, and similes.

It is interesting to note that the Creole mind has unconsciously adopted a metre of its own, which, although it may be similar to other West African metres, certainly leaves no trace of Aryan form in its stanzas. This may be due to the fact that poetry and music are always combined. The Creole bard improvises his music and his words together as occasion demands, just as the old Scotch bards improvised accompaniments to their ballads and sang them.

A stanza's popularity depends entirely on the merits of its tune; if the tune is popular, the words are sung by the bards at weddings and Christmas and the populace dance to them.

Imagine a wide open space or yard, packed with a circle of spectators of all classes—labourers, mechanics, merchants, big fat, complacent, smiling Creole mammies, in their flowing princess robes of multi-coloured silk; tiny timid bridesmaids, all lace, shyness, and blue ribbons; and in the centre of the group the Asheeko boys—three drummers, one banjo, a saw-man, and the bard. He wears khaki trousers and a glaring shirt. He bellows his song out, with a shake here and a trill there, a formidable crescendo which almost threatens to burst his windpipe, whilst the perspiration pours down his happy face.

“What ting e’ dey sing, Bo’?” Listen :

All for you,
All for you,

All for you,
 All for you.
 Take her into the churchyard ;
 March her up to the altar,
 Put the ring on her finger, Oh !
 All for you.

Here there is subconscious beauty of thought, but crudeness of expression, an unconscious strength in the repetition of the first phrase "All for you."

"You" represents the bridegroom. The second "you" represents "me," and should be followed by a mark of interrogation.

"All for you !" says the bard.
 "Really, all for me ?" questions the bridegroom, bewildered.
 "Yes, all for you," the bard repeats.
 "All for me," agrees the bridegroom.
 "Yes, if you take her into the churchyard,
 If you lead her up to the altar ;
 If you put the ring on her finger,
 She's all for you."

"All for you" shout the little urchins, careless of time or time metre ; "All for you," sing the young maidens tremulously, with the mists of dreams and future hopes veiling their dark eyes ; "All for you," quaver the old maids in uncertain falsetto ; "All for you," shout the young men hilariously.

The theme is introduced, questioned, reintroduced, expanded, brought to a climax, and resolved again into subject. The number of syllables fall in the following order in the original version : three syllables in the first line, three in the second line, three in the third line (quite consistent), seven in the fifth line, seven in the sixth line. Now comes a queer twist—seven syllables in the seventh line, with an additional and entirely superficial "Oh," which makes it eight syllables, followed by a further eccentricity, in reverting, without warning, to the first phrase of three syllables. This brings us back to the introduction, and simultaneously the end of the verse. No reference has been

made to the terms "foot," iambic, trochaic, etc., because the Creole does not use a specified "foot," although he uses a specified beat (drum beat). The Creole metre depends on the rhythm of the moment. If the dancers dance in nine eight time, then the three syllables "All for you" must be divided into nine eight, and subsequently all the following lines. Since neither the first, second, third, fourth, nor fifth lines divide equally into the denominator, a free syncopation must be introduced to make it divisible by nine.

No words may be added, vowels may be held on for any length; a word may be repeated, and the accent shifted precariously, so long as the three triple beats are definitely established. It is needless to say that this requires some ingenuity and skill, though a Creole child does it quite naturally. If the dancers shift suddenly to three four time, the bard does not change the song, but alters the rhythm by replacing the accents.

Here it will be seen that no song is written in any definite metre, but in a definite number of syllables and lines. The singer applies his own metre, using the original verse and tune. In some cases one metre will last a month, sometimes an hour. A song may last five years—some have lived twenty. The song quoted here is about two years old and is still extremely popular. The authors are unknown except by confederate strolling bards, who have an acknowledged chieftainship amongst them.

"Ah we don' tire," explodes one dancer, suddenly stopping, not because she is tired of the song, but has slipped out of the feeling of the rhythm. Everyone stops, chattering in awkward groups without vacating the ring. Altercation is rife amongst the Asheeko boys. "Money?" "All right then, look um!" A Creole "mammy" executes a few steps, holding the money in her mouth. The bard stretches out his hand for it. "Play first; pull oder sing" ("Sing something else"), everyone yells in chorus. He grins sheepishly and breaks into something else. The coin is dropped into his open palm.

What does he sing? Listen:

Who go call Leah for me,
 Leah, aye ?
 Who go call Leah for me,
 Leah, aye ?
 If na boy, I go gi' um me Daddy name ;
 If na girl, I go gi' um me Mammy name ;
 Who go call Leah for me,
 Leah, aye ?
 Oh, who go call Leah for me,
 Leah, aye ?

Here again is a vivid mental picture, minus adequate means of portrayal. It is the picture of the pampered darling son of the aristocracy, tired out with excess, finding out that nothing can dim his vision of Leah—dark eyed, velvet-skinned Leah—a peasant girl, perhaps, or a fisher maid. "Who go call Leah for me ?" Some barrier, which he cannot surmount ; a longing that cannot be satisfied ; we are not told what it is, but the plaintive melancholy ditty expresses it. He has everything except the one thing essential to his happiness.

"Who go call Leah for me ?" (questions the boy). "Which Leah, aye ?" "Who go call (the only) Leah (in the world) for me ?" "That Leah ?" "Yes, if a boy calls her, he shall be as the adopted first-born of my father. If a girl finds her, she shall be as mine own sister, born of the same mother. "Who go call Leah for me ?" (questions the boy endlessly). "Which Leah ?" (they ask again, perhaps searching for more details). "Why, the only Leah, whom I love." "The Leah you love ?" (they ask).

There the whole drama is suspended ; the dancers interpreting a tragic or a comic conclusion, according to their mood.

Technically, the sequence of three syllables, followed by two, is used again. This time it is reversed. The verse also contains eight lines ; the last two form a chorus. The whole song terminates with three syllables, "Leah, aye ?" which open the stanza and introduce the character in the second line. Notice the "Oh" at the beginning of the ninth line ; it is the same "Oh" which occurs at the end of the line seven in "All for you."

We have here an evidence of a feeling towards a higher development ; the creative ability refuses to lie dormant. There is a trend for new self-expression, an unconscious groping after more beauty ; but where are the teachers ? Who will come and teach these descendants of the emancipated slaves who were shipped overseas, the beauty, the inexpressible beauty of nature, and the dormant beauty of the soul ?

Freetown, Sierra Leone.

AQUAH LALUAH.

EASTERN PLAYS AND POEMS.

The theme of the *Magdalen* offers (if I may be forgiven for saying so) one of the most dramatic possibilities ever known. Edward and Theodosia Thompson have utilised it in the first of their "Three Eastern Plays" (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd.). They have chosen the period after the Resurrection, when the *Magdalen* is living a frugal life in a house near a camp. Anna and Hephzibah come to visit her in order to persuade her to come and live in the more reputable Christian quarter. The moderate tolerance of the older woman, Hephzibah, is well contrasted with the narrow-minded, taunting manner of the younger, Anna, who is "about thirty, sharply pretty, small, active, shrewish." The dignity of Miriam (*Magdalen*) seems to emanate from an intense inward spiritual fire. "But the Church!" she cries. "Surely they trust me! . . ." Alas! the Church is sadly intolerant. "Men's idle talk is no new thing to me," sighs Miriam, ". . . all my life is shadowed by the life that went before." She is the apotheosis of all lost dreams, futile regrets, shadowy strivings after rainbow-fancies that vanish ere their beauties can be grasped, yet ever with the Presence in her heart, the Light that came to her and changed her world.

. . . "Why should our minds
Be meshed in webs of our own fashioning—
Fastened for ever to dull, dusty things,

The same blind way, always the same blind way ?
Are you so happy ? Do you never hear
The night-wind on the mountains, the great wind
That comes from the dark space between the stars
And shakes our valley as it rushes by ? "

And Hephzibah (gently) :—

“ Long years ago,
I, too, believed this was the better life.

But the years go by,
And men and women find themselves content
With homely duties.”

There is a human touch about this lingering regret which finds no echo in the vindictive Anna's heart. “ If I could *tell* my hate ! ” To Miriam comes Anthony, a Roman lover of times gone by, anti-Christian, ardently amorous, passion-swept. And from his mouth there issue passages of rare beauty :—

“ Can I forget
The peasant-maiden on a windy hill
Sun-burned, thyme-scented, laughing as she stretched
Her arms above her head and tried to touch
The soft blue pigeons hurrying to their rest . . . ? ”

The only false note is struck at the conclusion of a fine love passage, “ My mad Magdalen ! My Cleopatra ! My wild Eastern queen ! ” is too reminiscent of pseudo-Oriental melodrama.

The two other plays, *The Queen of Ruin* and the *Clouded Mirror*, are exclusively Indian, and convincingly so. The courageous defiance of Padmani, Rani of Chitor (a very Helen among women), which she flings in the face of the fearsome goddess Kali, “ a leech that will not quit the skin unless gorged with blood ” (Horace), before whom her husband, her stepson, and even the commander of the Rajput forces, turn pale and tremble, is superbly done.

“ What has she done through all the years but call
For slaughter, still for slaughter ? While our veins
Hold blood to spill she will be clamorous.
In my own land the Gods are merciful . . .

our women there
Pass from a laughing Youth to motherhood
Still smiling, and to age serene and calm,
Nor ever yield their trembling bodies up
To the fire's torture.”

This is, of course, a reference to *sati*-practice (on which subject there is an interesting terminal essay in the volume). The Priest of Kali is indignant :—

"They are not chaste like ours !
They do not follow their dread lords in death."

And Padmani :—

"Your pardon, Brahmin ! Here you do us honour,
Great honour—in the way your gods command,
But we are happier there."

What a world of wistfulness in the last five words !

Kali, demanding the death of twelve kings, yet says, "This malice that I am is not myself."

Ursi, one of the Rana's sons, goes to his death, and his ten-year-old wife, Kamala, is saved from the funeral pyre by Padmani till such time as the women of Chitor, led by the Rani, shall immolate themselves in sacrificial fires. Death before surrender. It is a mighty subject, this *sati*, and difficult to grasp by Western minds. One comment—the lapse into rhyme at the end of the play seems somewhat in the nature of a let-down and detracts from the dignity that has gone before.

There is in the *Clouded Mirror* a subtle touch that would apply to modern times :—

"A faithful wife," says the queen to her unfaithful husband, "But tell me

Are there no faithful husbands ? Is there one
Would lose a little finger for his wife ? "

And Subha replies, rather feebly :—

"Our Scriptures nowhere issued such commands."
"No," returns the Queen, "they were written by men ! "

Verily, *respondes, ut tuus est mos, pauca*, oh queen !

Rajput pride stalks through this play like a proud lion. Illusion, in the person of the Sannyasi, veils it like a morning mist.

"A Persian's heaven is easily made,
'Tis but black eyes and lemonade,"

chirruped Tom Moore. Well, we have become more enlightened since the days when Lalla Rookh "sounded the loud timbrel" on England's fair shores. This "Persian Anthology" (Methuen) may literally be called a labour of love. The author, the late Edward Granville Browne ("Johnny"), understood Persia and the Persians as few men have done. This will be plain to anyone who reads his "Year Among the Persians," or his erudite histories of Persian literature. Books can breathe love as well as personality, and love

breathes through the books of E. G. Browne. In the present little volume the Introductory Memoir is written by a friend (J. B. Atkins), and the Note on Persian Poetry also by a friend (Sir Edward Denison Ross). The selection has been made to please the general public and not exclusively for the benefit of Persian scholars. It is a comprehensive selection, coming under six headings :—(1) Occasional ; (2) Mystic ; (3) Lyric ; (4) Moral ; (5) Narrative ; (6) Prose. Naturally it is weak in places—anthologies are invariably uneven. Doubtless, also, the lyric form will make the most appeal. Especially beautiful is No. 16, by Baba Tahir :—

“ Magar shīr u palangī, ay dil, ay dil !
Ba-mū dā'im bi-jangī, ay dil, ay dil !
Agar dastum futī, Knūnat vi-rīzhum :
Vi-vīnum tā chi rangī, ay dil, ay dil ! ”

“ Lion or leopard fierce thou surely art,
Ever at war with us, O heart, O heart !
If I can catch thee, I will spill thy blood,
And see of what strange hue thou art, O heart ! ”

And No. 17 (Farrukhi) has a pleasing rhythm :—

“ Since the meadow hides its face in satin shot with greens and blues,
And the mountains wrap their brows in silken veils of seven
hues. . . . ”

The vanity of human desires and human accomplishments threads its way like a trickle of ink through a funnel of frosted glass in those poems coming under the heading of “ Moral.”

“ For sixty-two years many arts did I study :
What gain do they bring me in glory or gold ? ”

laments Firdawsi. Nothing, save the regret for a lost youth and its sins.

“ Strive from the Outward Form to the Inward Sense to win.

For the world is a thievish game, from which no man may save
Himself, be he Sultan or subject ; his goods, be he master or
slave.”

Doubtless the reader will notice some resemblance between the style of Abu Sa'id ibn Abi'l-Khayr (No. 6) and that of Omar Khayyām, though the ribaldry of the latter is lacking (*vide* Note on Persian Poetry).

The Persians have many tales of love (mostly unrequited) and valour upon which to found narrative poems. Most famous among them, perhaps, is that of Shirin and Farhad, of which a passage from Nizami's version is here given. Omar, himself, does not appear in these pages.

Jami throws forth a challenge :—

“ Verse which accordeth with the vulgar mood
Is known to men of taste as weak and crude.”

What say you to this, Sir Philip Sidney ? “ Poetry is the companion of camps,” and Persia is the land of poets. Translation is never wholly satisfactory (as has been said before scores of times), but it is good to see the East coming to the West in a handy volume, not in a colossal tome. The Moslem fire that ran in the veins of these ardent spirits has never died, but burns now, a steady flame, in the lamp of their utterances.

“ He is alone, beside Him there is none ;
No God there is but He, and He is One ! ”

GWENDOLINE GOODWIN.

AN ANCIENT EPITAPH

HALT, stranger, for a space, and read :
Unto my meagre tale give heed.

Beneath this homely headstone lies
A lovely dame, yclept Gervyse.

Devoted mother, constant wife,
She loved two children into life.

Now one beneath the sod is laid :
The other plies an honest trade.

Abroad but rarely she was seen :
And then, she bore her like a queen.

She charmed her guests with words of gold,
And spun her wool : my tale is told.

JOHN COOK.

THE ANGLO-CYMRIC SCHOOL OF POETS.*

1. The word "Anglo-Cymric" raises at once the question of nationality, and especially that of language. It further implies a comparison between the output of English verse by those of Welsh blood and associations, and that of the body of English poetry. Though the first may at times seem small in amount and not of high importance as regards form and content, several things have to be borne in mind :

(a) That west of the Severn and the Dee there are to-day whole tracts of country, with scores of thousands of people, who use a living language that was spoken before the Romans set forth to conquer our land. The survival of our tongue, even in the face of centuries of pressure from a strong rival language, is one of the miracles of linguistic vitality. While Gaelic and Erse have practically succumbed before the onset of English, Welsh still survives in all its strength and beauty.

(b) The impulse of every man who is moved to express himself artistically is to use the medium that is nearest to his heart and soul—the medium where the experiences of the people of his own blood are already enshrined. Up to quite recent times Welshmen have naturally expressed themselves in Welsh, since they wished to appeal to those of their own nation ; and that is why so few Welsh poets have attempted to express their thoughts in English. William Sharp, in his introduction to *Lyra Celtica*, acknowledged this to be due "to the isolation of Wales through her language, and to the passionate attachment of the Cymru of to-day to their native tongue, as strong amongst the unlettered as amongst ardent scholars." The force and vitality of Welsh are not to be judged from the streets of Cardiff, nor from its use in the industrial valleys of Glamorgan and Monmouthshire, where there has been a large influx of people from the border counties of England.

(c) Any person who wishes to glean the richness of the soul of Greece learns Greek, and he who desires to divine the genius of Rome learns Latin. But there are people who think they can divine the whole scope of the Welsh soul without learning the language in which it is expressed. The man who will not learn Greek and Latin cannot claim to be a scholar in the real sense of the word ; so those who will not (or cannot) learn Welsh shut themselves out from a large field of experience, knowledge, and beauty, and are so much the poorer. They may rejoice in their poverty, or, like the fox and the grapes, deride things out of their grasp ; but

* Notes of an address delivered before the Cardiff Rotary Club by Mr. Lewis Davies, B.A.

surely it is not either manly or generous to speak slightly of a tongue and a literature that are amongst the oldest and most glorious in the world, and have been amongst the most vitalising powers of thought on the Continent of Europe.

(d) When the charge is made that "the Scoto-Celtic writers of to-day, both in prose and poetry, have produced more Anglo-Celtic literature than Wales has done since the beginning of the century . . . and Ireland again, in poetry at any rate, has given us more than Scotland," some qualifying thoughts should strongly be considered :

(i) The amount of poetry produced in Gaelic and Erse is of very small proportion, while that of Welsh is comparatively like a broad and stately river.

(ii) Scotland depends largely for her Anglo-Celtic literature upon a dialect. Especially is this the case with Burns, the most world-famous of her poets, whose charm and distinction lie in the use of dialect. Take for example just one line : "A man's a man for a' that."

If a Welshman desired to express the same idea in English, he would be compelled, since he has no dialect, to write : "A man's a man for *all* that," which is a descent from the distinguished to the commonplace.

The only really just comparison here would be to take two Celtic countries whose inhabitants habitually and largely use their native language—preserved over a couple of thousand years—and who, in addition, use English *not as a dialect, but as a language in its recognised purity*. Judged by this standard, the plea even of a scholar like William Sharp loses most of its point.

2. The comparison sometimes made between the output and standard of the Anglo-Cymric poets and that of the purely English poets has in it, surely, an element of the ridiculous when we consider that there are more than three times as many people in London alone as there are in the whole of Wales. And I think you will agree with me that it would be an amazing literary feat, bordering on the miraculous, were people using a second language to equal, or even excel, people using one—and that their own.

3. For a true appreciation of the influence of Welsh, and of the Welsh (or Cymric) spirit, everyone should read Renan's *Poetry of the Celtic Races*. Take one paragraph : "It was through the Mabinogion that the Welsh imagination exercised its influence on the Continent ; that it transformed, in the twelfth century, the poetic art of Europe, and realised this miracle—that the creations of a half-conquered race have become the universal feast of imagina-

tion for mankind." So those who write in Welsh to-day are in the true succession of a mighty inheritance.

4. Now let us take a glimpse of those who used English as their medium of expression. Three really great Welshmen stand out: George Herbert (1593-1632), Henry Vaughan, of Talybont-on-Usk, (1621-1695), Treherne—to say nothing of Dyer, in praise of whom Wordsworth wrote an immortal sonnet. Their greatness lies in this, that they express the peculiar genius of the Welsh endowment; and also in the influence they exercised upon those who are purely English poets: *e.g.*, Wordsworth (who owes to Vaughan, it is said, the inspiration for his *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality*), Gray, Cowper, Coleridge, Tennyson, Matthew Arnold and Christina Rossetti. If a comparison is made between George Herbert, even in his earliest efforts, and the lyricists of the Elizabethan age—such as Herrick, who was his contemporary—the difference is characteristic and profound. The latter express the *joie de vivre*, the former a deep spirituality.

5. Later come three men of Cymric stock whose influence was widespread, though in the last case somewhat fleeting: George Meredith, William Morris, and Sir Lewis Morris.

6. Then follow some who are connected with Wales, and have Welsh associations: Alfred Noyes, W. H. Davies and the late Edward Thomas. Of the first it has been said, since he spent some of his most impressionable years at Aberystwith, and studied at its university: "Who knows but that part of the *Epic of Drake*, *Forty Singing Seamen* and *The Tales of the Mermaid Tavern* first surged into the poet's mind by the waters of Cardigan Bay?"

7. The number of Anglo-Cymric poets to-day is very large, though their fame may not be far spread. Among those who have lately published volumes of verse are: A. G. Prys Jones, Huw Menai, Sarnicol, Wil Ifan, Gwili, E. Stanley James, Thomas Macdonald, and Emrys James; while Welshmen outside their native land who have added to this wealth are Sir Herbert Warren (President of Magdalen College, Oxford), Ernest Rhys, Elinor Jenkins, Marion Pryce, the Hon. Evan Morgan, Oliver Davies, Iolo A. Williams, Dr. Lloyd (Windsor), Dudley G. Davies, Eliot Crawshaw Williams, E. Howard Harris, Gertrude Williams, and Winifred Tasker. To these should be added that long list of occasional poets who add to the glory of Wales by contributing to the journals and periodicals, not only provincial, but of London as well. Among them are Prof. Gwyn Jones, Dr. D. Vaughan Thomas, A. J. Perman, Percy Thomas, Mrs. Elwyn James, Wynne Griffiths, Alfred Edmunds, Ifano Jones,

Mrs. B. Price Hughes, and E. Williams David. Then we must not forget those translators who work so worthily to make known the beauties of Welsh poetry to those who cannot unveil them for themselves—Arthur Percival Graves, H. Idris Bell, and his father, C. C. Bell, Canon E. O. Jones, and “Anellydd” (the rector of St. Nicholas, Goodwick, Pembrokeshire).

8. Regarding three poets who are of especial interest to Glamorgan. There is a fourth, of whom I am forbidden to say anything ! If I might use a nautical illustration I would liken *Wil Ifan* to a pleasure yacht—light, graceful, and calculated to give a sense of pleasure ; *Prys Jones* to a Spanish galleon, greater and more beautiful in design, with ornately decorated sails bellying out to a breeze, warm, refreshing, inspiring ; *Huw Menai* to a schooner of the Shire Line, laden with a varied freight, rounding the Horn under stress of canvas—fighting the grimmest elements of nature—battling against mountainous waves of dread opposition, riding the curved terror, and then wallowing in the depths that lie between successive waves. Here we have a profound realism that burks no facing of the facts of life, and that throbs with the experiences that shake human nature to its utmost deeps.

* * *

“Cantabile,” by John Caldwell-Johnston (East and West, Ltd., 5s. net), contains some distinguished work. There is a singing of little birds in the author’s heart, and he reproduces their melody, conveying most happily a musical sense of song by words that have the right nuance of form and colour also. Other Nature sounds and pictures are similarly deftly suggested and characterised. As Mr. Caldwell-Johnson writes in a beautifully phrased poem on “Beauty,” in which his book reaches its apex :

To capture Beauty on the wing
Is not a very easy thing ;
To woo Queen Beauty as she flies,
Needs strange and wonder-shaped eyes,

yet Mr. Caldwell-Johnston has succeeded, so rare and penetrating is his genius. We commend particularly this beautiful ode to “Beauty” to speakers of verse as something more worthy of their attention than the greater part of their selections, something on which a trained, melodious voice, savouring sweet sounds and deep feeling, can exercise its qualities.

* * *

The latest addition to the ever-increasing Wisdom of the East series is An Anthology of Modern Indian Poetry, compiled by our

reviewer of Eastern poems and drama, Gwendoline Goodwin, whose notice of a Persian anthology appears in this issue. The main channels of Indian verse—religious feeling, a far from nebulous mysticism, a close affinity with Nature and a meticulous record of her manifestations and moods—are illustrated in Mrs. Goodwin's well-informed selections, which includes several Poetry Reviewers, notably Mrs. Kazi, J. J. Vakil (a collection of whose poems is about to appear), and F. Kabraji.

* * *

We welcome the Staple Inn Series of attractive reprints of famous poems. It is a surprise that in these days of high production charges a copy of *The Cenci* is offered for 1s., and *Selections from Thomas Hood*, with a coloured frontispiece. *Omar Khayyám* and *The Ancient Mariner* have a wider appeal, but they are acceptable in this dainty edition.

* * *

We hope that the multiplication of narrative poems indicates the arrival of the day of the long poem which Sir Edmund Gosse foresaw some years ago. Leslie Day is the latest author to attempt fame and fortune in the footsteps of Sir Walter Scott and Miss Sackville West. In *The Gates of Paradise*, Mr. Day writes fluently of natural and mystical things, he understands the language of flowers and the magic of the woodlands and contrasts spiritual and profane love in delicate and lively verse, and brings his lovers to a happy haven at the last.

* * *

The Rev. F. de W. Lushington, V.P. and Continental Representative of The Poetry Society, has given a series of lectures in Italy, including addresses at the two most important schools in Florence, and before cosmopolitan hotel audiences. Mr. Lushington proposes to visit the United States on a lecture tour on behalf of the Society in the autumn. American members who can assist in furthering the arrangements are requested to communicate with the editor.

* * *

Owing to the variety of languages in which poems were submitted for the International Shakespeare Memorial Theatre Poem Competition, adjudication has been prolonged. We hope to be in a position to announce the awards in the next issue of THE POETRY REVIEW.

A TENNYSON COMMENTARY:

V. THE METRES OF "MAUD."

To explain all the metres in *Maud* would require an exhaustive treatise on metre as (with a few exceptions) nearly all metres are employed. One may define the metre of a passage and yet such a description is not applicable to all that passage, as especially in passages in the middle—the metre changes from line to line—Tennyson seems to have tried to indicate the changeable moods of his hero by his frequent changes in the metre and the irregularities in the metre serve to emphasise the weakness of his hero's character. Tennyson's great achievement lies in having preserved the appearance of unity in the metre running through the poem in spite of so much diversity in its use. The lines in the early part of the poem are long and the movement slow. With the coming of passion the lines tend to grow shorter and the metre becomes increasingly irregular. The solemn note and slow movement of the opening stanzas is once more used at the end, for the closing lines of the poem are iambic pentameters.

More particular analysis.

I. Hexameters, mainly iambic and anapæstic.

II—IV. Irregular hexameters. V—X. Mixed trimeters and tetrameters (with occasional dimeters, *e.g.*, IX. I was walking a mile) largely anapæstic.

VII. Form of ballad metre. XI. Iambic trimeters. XII. Ballad metre double rhymes. XIII. Tetrameters (mainly iambic) occasional trimeters, *e.g.*, with a strong British stare. XIV. Trimeters varied with tetrameters and one dimeter.

XV. Iambic (mainly) tetrameters with one dimeter.

XVI. Similar, but more varied. XVII. With trochaic meters.

XVIII. Chiefly pentameters and trimeters. XIX—XXI. Mainly trimeters (2 iambs and 1 anapæst).

XXII. Iambs and anapæsts arranged in trimeters and tetrameters.

XXIII. Similar, but introducing pentameters. XXIV. Trochees and dactyls in trimeters.

XXV. Iambic trimeters. XXVI. Iambic mainly, frequent hyper-metric syllables.

XXVII. Mainly iambic and anapæsts arranged in trimeters.

XXVIII. Pentameters mainly iambic but containing many anapæsts.

ELIZABETH HICKSON.

* * *

Readers interested in the Heidelberg Shakespeare Festival on July 26th and following days are requested to communicate with the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

A NOTE ON THE SONNET.

BY far the most important of the various kinds of lyric poetry that are classified according to form is the sonnet. It is the only one of these exotic and highly artificial forms of verse that has given imperishable masterpieces to English literature. The rondeau, the triolet and the sestina have been cultivated, but have never attained to a consummate and unchallenged excellence among the flowers of poesy.

It is otherwise with the sonnet. Artificial though its form may be, and strict the discipline it imposes on its votaries, neither the one nor the other has prevented it from becoming a favourite with many of our greatest poets and the repository of some of their profoundest thoughts and most exquisite music. "With this key Shakespeare unlocked his heart"—

"A glow-worm lamp,
It cheered mild Spenser, called from Fairy-land
To struggle through dark ways; and when a damp
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
The Thing became a trumpet."

Among the latest-born of all the forms of verse, the sonnet was invented in Italy early, probably, in the twelfth century, and at once became popular. Little more than a hundred years after its introduction it was wrought to its first pinnacle of perfection by the impassioned genius of Petrarch.

Our own morning-star of song, Chaucer, great as were his obligations to "the crown and crowned of Laura and of Italy," forbore to lay him under contribution in this respect—a forbearance that we can only regret.

Not until the burgeoning of the Renaissance had strongly tintured English literary methods with Italian culture did the sonnet make its appearance in English dress. Sir Thomas Wyatt, he of "the tried intent," seems to have been the first to attempt its transference from the "choice Italian" to our more rugged Northern speech. As was but natural, he adopted the Petrarchan model of octave and sestet, though it is interesting to observe that the genius of the language led even this pioneer in untrodden ways to adopt the closing couplet—that couplet which was to become the characteristic feature of the truly English form of the sonnet, and to be handled with such triumphant success by the genius of Shakespeare. Wyatt was closely followed by his friend and disciple, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, a large number of sonnets from their pens appearing in 1557 in Tottell's *Miscellany*, several years subsequent to the death of both.

As could hardly otherwise be expected of pioneers, neither Wyatt nor Howard displays a complete mastery of the new form they introduced—indeed, they experienced grave difficulties even with the syntax of their mother-tongue ; but the mere fact of the cultivation of the sonnet-stanza and the very discipline it required was of the greatest advantage to English poetical methods and a most beneficial reaction to the utter lawlessness of fifteenth-century verse. If the pair produced nothing in the way of sonnets worthy of an immortality of fame, they at least paved the way for such productions ; and flowering-time was soon to come.

The popularity of the new form being, by their efforts, thus established, there began the first great period of sonnet-writing in English. Numberless collections thereof appeared during the sixth and seventh decades of the sixteenth century, chiefly in the curious but highly popular form of “miscellanies”—or, as we should now call them, anthologies—of contemporary verse. Among the most noteworthy are those of Sir Philip Sidney, including the famous “Moan” sonnet ; that *To Sleep*, with its close affinities to Keats’s poem on the same subject ; and the solemn and majestic harmonies of the one beginning :

“Leave me, O Love, which reachest but to dust ;
And thou, my mind, aspire to higher things.”

Nor, among the sonnets of this particular period, can those of Spenser be omitted. The sonnet of religious emotion has never been wrought to a nobler or more ecstatic pitch than by Spenser in his “Easter” invocation :

“Most glorious Lord of life ! that on this day
Didst make Thy triumph over death and sin.”

With the Sonnets of Shakespeare the outburst reached its culmination. Published in 1609, but doubtless written, in large part at least, nearly a score of years earlier, the Sonnets are unparalleled alike in their exquisite beauty of expression and in their profundity of thought, which ranges through all the heights and depths of the passion of love. With their publication the sonnet may be said to have reached the very sea-mark of its utmost sail. “The coast-line of humanity,” says Professor Saintsbury, “must be wholly altered, the sea must change its nature, the moon must draw it in different ways, before that tide-mark is passed.”

Where all is so wonderful, any attempt at a choice must inevitably be a perilous undertaking. Yet one speaks from the vantage-ground of common consent in instancing those sonnets beginning “Shall I

compare thee to a summer's day ? ” “ When to the sessions of sweet, silent thought,” “ That time of year thou mayst in me behold,” in the latter of which occurs the peerless description of the trees in winter :

“ Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.”

And few are the anthologists who can refrain from quoting “ From you have I been absent in the spring,” “ When in the chronicle of wasted time,” and—most peerless of all—“ Let me not to the marriage of true minds admit impediments.”

In form the sonnets of Shakespeare differ from anything that had gone before. The Petrarchan method of octave and sestet is abandoned for a douzain of alternate rhymes closing in a couplet. The most eminent critics have insisted that this later or “ English ” type of sonnet is to the full as legitimate and effective as the earlier or “ regular ” form. Without the presumption of opposing their dictum, a doubt may yet be entertained as to whether, save in the hands of the most exquisite masters of song, the first-named form is capable of being wrought to such gem-like perfection and married harmony of sound and sense as the sonnet of “ ebb and flow.” Drayton certainly attained to one perfect sonnet of the “ English ” kind—

“ Since there's no help, come, let us kiss and part ” ;

and a very charming one—“ Were I as base as is the lowly plain ”—is attributed to Joshua Sylvester ; but it is significant that the next great master of the form, Milton, whose first printed poem was a magnificent tribute to “ the admirable dramatic poet, W. Shakespeare,” reverted wholly to the older structural type, as, indeed, the great Dean of St. Paul's, in his lofty apostrophe “ To death,” had done before him.

But the deflection of the stream of English sonneteering into its more ancient channels—where, with few exceptions, it has mainly flowed ever since—is not the only or, indeed, the chief reason of the eminent place held by the sonnets of Milton in English literature. Few though they are—a bare score in number—by their agency was first made plain the complete suitability of the sonnet for occasional verse and for the poetising of didactic matter. Hitherto the sonnet had been confined almost entirely to the expression of the emotions of love, whether human or divine, but Milton indicated its adaptability to almost all the purposes for which it has since been used. Not in all was he equally successful ; that upon *Tetrachordon* is rather a terrifying thing, but a number, on the other hand, notably

those *On his blindness*, *To Cyriac Skinner*, and *The Late Massacre*, attain a sublimity of thought and language never surpassed before or since. God-like resignation, unconquerable fortitude, and the power of a righteous indignation breathe through them, each in turn, with an utterance almost superhuman.

With the coming of the Augustans began the decline of pure poetry for its own sake, and throughout the matter-of-fact days of the eighteenth century the sonnet was regarded, if not with contempt, with complete indifference. With the advent of that fundamental change in literary fashion known as the Romantic Revival a reaction set in. Wordsworth may be regarded as the pioneer of the new movement, and his sonnets rank second only to those of Shakespeare and Milton in importance. Like the last-named, he adopted the regular form, yet wrought it to a new and individual beauty. The *Westminster*, *Milton*, and *Venice* sonnets breathe a music as fresh and unstaled as 't is wonderful. In fondness for the form he was followed by the other great poets of the era. Shelley, choosing an irregular form, wrote the strangely beautiful *Ozymandias*; while Keats's work in this direction included such masterpieces of incomparable power and melody as his apostrophe *To Sleep*, *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer*, and his *Last Sonnet*.

Nor through the long Victorian era did the popularity of the sonnet wane. The two Rossettis were perhaps the most outstanding figures of the period—again using the Italian form—followed perhaps by Hartley Coleridge and E. B. Browning. Nearly every writer of the first rank turned on occasion to the sonnet, and the result is a rich storehouse of sonnet literature, of which Matthew Arnold's sonnet on Shakespeare is typical—magnificent homage supremely well expressed.

And the sonnet at the present day continues to attract the best of our national poets. Of their large output—no inconsiderable part of consummate excellence—one can only refer the reader to many contemporary volumes, some of which, such as the sonnets of W. Dowling, the Sheffield labourer, F. E. Dearborough's beautiful work, the masterly examples in *The Golden Archer*, deserve to be better known, and to Robertson's *Golden Book of English Sonnets*. Read these and hunt up other examples in conjunction with the *Encyclopædia Britannica* monograph on this exquisite poetic form.

REX CLEMENTS.

The Blake Centenary will be celebrated at the John Rylands Library, Manchester, in October. A distinguished scholar will take the chair, and a lecture will be given by a Blake expert. A Blake Exhibition of books, portraits, etc., will be held, if possible, by August.

THE POETS' FELLOWSHIP.

THE PREMIUM EDITOR'S REPORT.

THE present Premium Editor returns to an absorbing task that occupied him fully a decade ago to find things are not as they were. The excessively stimulating influences that then prevailed have passed; the high, keen fervour of those hectic days, which was responsible for verse-writing by people who have not attempted it since, has languished and died. We have now a body of less empirical contributors who are superior to temporary ebullitions, and their work is steadier, more uniform, and more literary, with less evidences of tendencies and cerebral irritation, and even of inspiration. Numerous deductions and comparisons might be made, but our immediate business is to pass judgment on the sifted MSS. without reference to the spate that overwhelmed us ten years ago. The individuals change, the POETRY REVIEW persists, and the eternal values of poetry remain, although expression and content may vary. We find most impressive a lengthy poem by G. W. Eustace (Arundel) that might have been written at any period. "Many waters cannot quench" is a threnody of love lost and redeemed which cannot be dated. We must distinguish in some way, above a "highly commended," the two individual nature etchings, *The Little Lane* by A. D. L. Wilson, and *Quartet* by Dorothy Ewens—excellent examples of keen observation allied with delicate word-painting and a sense of colour, sound, and the fitness of things—and G. E. Merrick's artless artistry in the *Vagabond*, therefore deduct 50 per cent. from Mr. Eustace and divide it between these three, with a "highly commended" (recognised by a small book in lieu of a certificate) for the work of A. E. Mackay (Chelsea), L. M. Brown (Bicester), F. R. Saunton (Nottingham), A. H. Mendess (Trinidad), J. W. Nance (Brombrough), John Cook (Lenzie) and T. E. Casson (Newton-le-Willows), Noel Allport (Polesworth), M. K. M. Brown (Southampton), T. B. Crawford (Paisley), Vera McCormick (Hounslow), J. L. Fielding (Abergele), E. Walker (Bournemouth), John Purdie (Paisley) and John Willwyn (Oswestry) are "commended." Although we appear to have got into a groove and developed a group, it is refreshing to find some newcomers among the "runners-up," and we hope the Fellowship now will make a more catholic appeal. We are disconcerted by the almost complete absence of American contributors and by the serious falling-off of demands for "criticism." Have we got self-satisfied or sophisticated or distrustful of irrelevant arguments on verbal derivations and the use of "c" for "k" at the beginning of anglicised Greek words. Our criticisms at one period were a notable feature, widely quoted, frank, pointed, constructive. They filled pages of THE POETRY

REVIEW until the limitations and cost of space caused them to be sent by post—the beginning of a decline which has left us with less than 10 per cent. of our former numbers. We hope to see a revived use of this useful service and a consequent increase of the usual premium offer. Attention is called to the present rules and conditions.

The usual premium of £2 for the best poem or poems submitted to the Premium Editor during the month (without limitation of subject) is continued, and six books will be awarded in recognition of "highly commended."

Not more than *four* poems may be submitted at the same time.

Every entry must be certified as original and as not having appeared in print, and the name and address of the competitor must be attached to the MS.

All MSS. submitted for these premium awards should be addressed to "The Premium Editor," the Poet's Fellowship, POETRY REVIEW Office, before August 1st, accompanied by stamped addressed envelope, or international coupon.

If criticism is desired, 2s. 6d. (If a more detailed postal criticism is desired, 5s. should be sent.)

Entries must be either typewritten or written in ink on one side of the paper only, and contributors must be members of the Poetry Society or registered postal subscribers to THE POETRY REVIEW.

* * *

Owing to Mrs. Bartlett's absence in Europe, the "Service" and "Civilisation" entries have not been dealt with yet. It is hoped that the special Board of Adjudicators arranged by our American Editor will be able to announce their awards in the next issue of THE POETRY REVIEW.

Attention is drawn to the new Bartlett premium offer (The Leader) announced on p. 202 (May issue).

* * *

POETRY IN CALIFORNIA.

Mr. Henry Meade Bland has included in an attractive little volume his *California: A Song of the Ultimate West, Looking Before and After*, a delicate study in Beauty and the Ideal, and *In Yosemite*, which Henry Markham acknowledges to be "the most elaborate poem ever written on the marvellous valley," containing (as do the other finely expressed poems also), lines of "true beauty and mystic music." Mr. Bland is steeped in poetry, with an instinctive love and wise understanding of humanity and nature, which he is able to express in beautiful tender verse. Prof. Bland, who is the President of the Edwin Markham Chapter of the Poetry Society, has also collected in a charming booklet the poems submitted in competition at a delightful, out-of-door meeting at Villa Montalvo,

Saratoga, in September last, when the poems were read and Gertrude Atherton distributed the awards in Senator Phelan's delightful open-air theatre. Mrs. Atherton wrote later that she, with ourselves and all our Poetry Society associates, "was filled with envy on that day at Montalvo when I listened to an outpouring of verse, all of a high level of excellence." As she adds, "It is at least something to be able to appreciate a too-neglected art." To the selected poems of these young singers of California, which surely will be saved from the fate of those dead cities and peoples whose epitaph was "They had no poets and they died," is added a little anthology of poems by well-known California writers, including Edwin Markham, Ruth Comfort Mitchell, Helen Wills, Senator Phelan and other bearers of the luminous torch in the Far West, together with the last poem by George Sterling, a sonnet on *Abraham Lincoln*, which we quote as an appendix to Markham's magnificent *Lincoln* poem printed last month. (By the way, Mr. Markham has autographed the revised versions of both *Lincoln* and *The Man with the Hoe*, "Inscribed with friendly greetings to THE POETRY REVIEW," which Mrs. Bartlett has had framed and presented to the Poetry Society's library.)

Not when we dwelt within its western shade
 Could we, untaught, discern our mountain's height :
 Long afterward, and nearer to the night,
 We saw its verifying shadow laid
 On sea and land, and from the plain surveyed
 Its ramparts great against the sunset light,
 And tears of wonder dimming then our sight,
 Beheld the summit gleam, the foothills fade.

The snows austere below our evening star—
 We knew not of the storms that gave them birth ;
 But now that we had wandered very far
 From those great flanks, those eagle-haunted spires,
 We felt an awe that our defeated earth
 Had soared so near the heavens' holy fires.

THE LEWIS PORTRAIT PREMIUM AWARD.

AN editorial board has sat somewhat severely on the group of poems submitted in response to the offer made by Mr. W. K. Lewis in the March issue of THE POETRY REVIEW. Judgment was regulated strictly by the definition of the premium donor, who stated that "by a portrait I do not mean merely a description of physical charm or peculiarities, . . . I should like the grotesque

and unusual to have an equal chance of success." All types of portraiture were attempted—the general and the personal, the physical and the moral, the photographic and the sketchy. The most successful serious work was submitted by Dr. Bertha Skeat, whose *Etymologist*—a portrait of her father, the famous Professor W. W. Skeat, who troubled our school days with his Anglo-Saxon derivations—was an impressive character study, marred by some slight irregularity in the sonnet form, and in consequence first place is given to the same contributor's *Her Portrait*—a sincere, effective piece of portraiture in poetry. Pre-eminent in another class is the charming, allusive, airy *You*, by Miss L. E. F. Barry (Montreal), who shares two-thirds of the premium with Miss Skeat. The admission of the grotesque justifies the division of the remaining guinea between Miss Esther Samms (Luton) for her *Fat Lady*—a scathing caricature—and the classical picture of *Andromeda*, by I. B. Nagel (Southsea).

Special commendation is given to poems by Elizabeth Wild, Berkeley, California (*Love's Portrait*); Vera Arlett, Worthing (*The Lonely Lady*); Emma B. King, New York (*An Artist*); M. E. Rose, Derby (*The Organist*); H. Derezinska, Strasburg (*Michael Angelo*); Marie Davidson, Kensington (*For Remembrance*); Isabel Kemsley, Rochester (a bucolic picture of a type of Kentish farmer); Clyde Robertson, Denver, Colorado (*The Spinster*); Hilda McDonald, Antigua, B.W.I. (*A Redheaded Boy*); John Purdie, Paisley (a poignant portrait of a scholar-soldier-son); and Caro Burden, Ceylon (*My Ayah*).

Mr. Lewis will offer another special premium in our next issue, and he hopes other readers will follow his example.

WOMEN'S PRIZE POEMS.

THIS year, for the first time, the Newdigate has been won by a woman, Miss Gertrude E. Trevelyan, a student of Lady Margaret Hall.

The poem, *Julia, Daughter of Claudius*, is based on J. A. Symonds's description of the discovery in 1485 of a marble tomb in the Appian Way containing the "body of a most beautiful girl of 15 preserved by precious unguents." Miss Trevelyan describes the legend in smoothly-flowing blank verse, of which the following lines are a good example :—

"Weep not ! In one soft noontide shower
There shine all suns that ever set.
Weep not for youth's swift morning hour—

The ripening corn knows no regret.
 What does the thrush cry from the thorn,
 The lark, high-soaring to the morn ?
 Sweet is the springtime, sweet the flower ;
 But summer's fruit is sweeter yet."

* * *

Miss V. Sackville West has been awarded the Hawthornden Prize of £100 (provided by Miss Alice Warrender) for what is deemed by the Committee to be the best literary production published during 1926. The award is made for her long poem, *The Land*.

Miss Sackville West is the daughter of Lord and Lady Sackville, of Knole, Sevenoaks, and the wife of the Hon. Harold Nicolson, who is a member of the Diplomatic Corps at Teheran. Her best known novels are *The Heir* and *The Dragon in Shallow Waters*. She has published short poems, including *The Sea Sonnet* and that gained the Bartlett Sea Sonnet Competition in THE POETRY REVIEW (*The Land* was reviewed by Arthur Flood in the March POETRY REVIEW), but *The Land* is the first long poem that she has attempted.

In announcing the award Mr. John Drinkwater said : " I suppose that on the rubbish heap of literature bad long poems hold an easy and lamentable pride of place, but I do not hesitate to say that a good long poem is the noblest kind of literature, and occasionally an author without any urging will write a good long poem and then it is a fitting occasion for caps in the air. Such a one is *The Land*. It is a kind of farmer's calendar and a closely detailed account of a farm's year, and it is written with the authority of one who knows her land in all its moods and seasons from childhood."

THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT.

AN ENGLISH JOAN OF ARC COMMITTEE.

THE Poetry Society group who participated in the St. Joan of Arc Fête at Rouen on May 30th had the honour of being received in private audience by the Archbishop of Rouen. In a very cordial speech his Eminence expressed deep gratification of the recognition accorded their local saint by a representative English organisation. The significance of the gesture was of great importance and made a deep impression on all men of goodwill and he had dealt with it in his address at the special service in commemoration of St. Joan in the cathedral (at which the English party had reserved places). The Archbishop proceeded to say that they might differ on religious and historic grounds, but they were united in the idea that had brought that group to Rouen—in the belief in a power behind the

world and the might of the spirit demonstrated by and through Joan of Arc. Their homage was due to that faith which animated and distinguished Joan and was superior to human limitations, to the handicaps of sex and birth under which she laboured. That recognition, too, was a protest against material motives and forces and an appreciation of the splendid truth of the strength and power of an idea and that all great lasting work was inspired and directed by spiritual vision. Hence the significance of the Poetry Society's "pilgrimage" which had profoundly impressed him and his colleagues.

Through Dr. Brunon, the historian and diplomat, the Municipality of Rouen expressed gratification at the participation of the English group in the Fête and their inclusion in the civic procession, which was headed by M. Poincaré, who delivered an impassioned oration on French national unity, Dr. Brunon appealed for the formation of an English Committee for the Celebration of Joan of Arc as a permanent development of that "entente cordiale" of the spirit. We will publish further details of the proposals shortly. The "pilgrims" to the wonderful old city, with its many associations with our Norman kings, visited among other places of great charm and interest the Abbey of S. Wandrille, where M. Maeterlinck wrote the *Blue Bird* and staged *Macbeth* in the haunted ruins and leafy groves. They were welcomed officially by the British Vice-Consul, who with the Municipality attached great value and importance of the event, for the intimate success and effectiveness of which the Society is indebted to the rare courtesy and attention of Mr. Bernard Florian, of Barclays Bank.

THE LADY MARGARET SACKVILLE ON VERSE-SPEAKING.

At the first Spring Examination for the Poetry Society's Gold Medal for excellence in Verse-Speaking, which took the form of a Poetry Recital by sixteen candidates at the new Blackfriars Theatre, Thames Embankment, the Examiner, Dr. H. H. Hulbert, M.A., announced that he was unable to award a single Gold Medal. The Poetry Society set a high standard which had to be maintained. They required the rhythmical interpretation of thought and the elimination of self-display and a really cultivated individuality. Dr. Hulbert proceeded to point out: "Although no candidate successfully reached the high standard of excellence required for the award of the Poetry Society's Gold Medal, quite a number of the candidates gave quite a meritorious performance and should with perseverance,

practice and experience succeed later on. There is still a tendency to rely upon a too superficial understanding of the subjects and thus impression was usually much more at fault than expression. Conviction must accompany distinctness, clearness in expression of the whole must be more in evidence than mere clearness in details, and rhythm or the concord of love and thought and sound must be allowed free play so that love and thought resounding in the sound make words and the thought quickening with life glow in the mind, burn on the tongue and are felt as well as heard. There is still a tendency to endeavour to get rhythmic effects by a reliance upon elocutionary and dramatic efforts. This factor, together with a disregard of the deeper or hidden meanings of the selected poems, led to the downfall of most of the candidates."

The Lady Margaret Sackville, who was present to present the medals and who defined the policy of the Poetry Society with regard to elocution on the formation of the Society, in a very pointed speech, said it was a very remarkable thing how their ideas as to the way poetry should be spoken had been developed and the standard raised since the Poetry Society was started. Formerly there was only elocution—now the word "elocution" had a grotesque and obsolete sound. The first thing necessary in an interpretation of poetry was to care for poetry very much and to understand it with a proper understanding; the right interpretation followed. Like an eye for colour or an ear for music, the appreciation of poetry could not be supplied by training, but it could be cultivated and developed. There was a great difference between those who really cared for poetry and those who only think they care, which is a very different thing, and to the former class belonged the real vocal interpreter who could express fully the sense of emotion and beauty of a poem. She considered the really good speaker of verse was as rare as the poet. The Poetry Society had done an excellent work in slowly persuading people that the speaking of poetry is something worthy of their attention and something fine to be attempted, but a great many people had yet to understand that there was pleasure to be derived from the vocal interpretation of poetry; that it was not a severe and dull and portentous thing. The Muses and the Graces were sisters. They had heard some beautiful voices, excellently trained, with perfect enunciation, but felt there was something lacking, that the speakers had not reached that high stage of development necessary to qualify them to be considered as ideal interpreters of poetry.

YOU

YOU of the velvet eyes and golden skin,
I like the pattern you were fashioned in,
Nimble and neat and knowing as a bird,
(Always a little better than your word),
Cheerful and constant, smiling as you go,
Brother to every creature, high and low;
Loving to give and serve for love alone,
Counting the highest joy a duty done,
Nor sooner done than by the next effaced,
In well-filled days with generous ardour traced,
Faithful in greater things, faithful in small,
Shall you be found the faithfullest of all?
You of the velvet eyes and golden skin!
God bless the pattern you were fashioned in!

LILY E. F. BARRY.

* * *

WE commend the suggestion made by Mr. Adams that literary material of value and interest to members of the Society should be exchanged between Centres and members. Calcutta and Hyderabad Centres have asked for the loan of papers on modern poetry read at other Centre meetings, and some private members would welcome correspondence on their favourite subjects in poetry. We are glad to facilitate such interchanges, and to answer reasonable inquiries respecting books, poems, and Poetry Society and POETRY REVIEW matters, provided correspondents enclose a stamped addressed envelope. They frequently neglect this, and occasionally abuse us for not spending the whole of our day, which is not limited by T.U. regulations or the Shop Hours Act, in answering inquiries involving research and unique sources of knowledge and experience in addition to supplying stationery and stamps. And we cannot provide strangers with material for lectures on poets and poetry. They can obtain adequate information and guidance through THE POETRY REVIEW, in which all modern poets and their books of any real importance and significance have been dealt with. We cannot summarise privately all the biographical, bibliographical, and critical matter we have published or are able to refer to. And we cannot undertake to trace obscure quotations.

* * *

Readers who receive any invitations or other communications from the "Poetry Lovers' Fellowship," or any similar organisation, are requested to send them on to the Editor.

THE HAUNTED HILL

*W*ILDNESS builds her nest there ;
Aloof, alone, forlorn.
And on the lonely crest there
No wind but what confess'd there
Some sorrow life hath borne.

From every quarter hie there
The winds that rove the skies ;
Like homing birds they cry there ;
Their mournful song shall die there
Only when sorrow dies.

The trees are gnarled and bent there ;
Queer shapes their branches take ;
Let no man pitch his tent there—
They say none rests content there ;
Nor ever sleeps to wake.

They say a phantom haunts there
A trysting-place of old ;
That when the red moon slants there
A voice once lovely chants there
A song of love long cold.

They say the four winds wail there :
When Spring is in the bud ;
Recount a dreadful tale there ;
And turn the midnight pale there
With moans to chill the blood.

Wildness builds her nest there ;
Aloof, alone, forlorn.
And on the lonely crest there
No wind but what confess'd there
Some burden life hath borne.

CYRIL G. TAYLOR.

THE VAGABOND

TRAVEL by the low road
They who can and will ;
I must go the high way,
Sheer across the hill.

Journey by the smooth path,
They who can may do ;
Let me slog the rough track
All the seasons through.

They who like may hearken
Drone of noontide bee ;
I will hear the wind pipe
Shrill from off the sea.

Many love the candles
In the vale a-shine ;
But the lights of heaven,
Moon and stars, are mine.

Deep in down and feathers
Let them slumber warm ;
Mine the scented hayricks
Of the downside farm.

They who will may savour
Scent of garden rose ;
Unto me the gorse bush
Richer, sweeter blows.

Stately meal and service
They may have who pay ;
Let me eat my food-scrap
Plodding on my way.

G. E. MERRICK.

BERMUDA LYRICS

VI.—A BERMUDA GARDEN.

O VER the wall the bourgainvillea vine
Droops in the languid breeze,
As purple as ethereal twilight wine
In crystal chalices.

Above, where palms and pointed cedars tower,
The cardinals wing along,
Like petals of the red hibiscus flower
Dowered with the gift of song.

After the chill of life, its moil, its stress,
How wrapt in rest it seems !
Here is the Garden of Forgetfulness ;
Here is the Bourne of Dreams !

VII.—THRALL TO THE WIND.

Oh, the wind is in the cedars, and the wind is in the
palms,
And I listen to its murmur like the sound of many psalms ;
Oh, the wind is in the mangroves, and the live oaks—how
they sway,
And the leaves of the banana hear the burden of its lay !

And the urns of the hibiscus spill the scarlet of their fire
On the wind that breathes among them its old whisper of
desire ;
And the oleanders waver, and the rhododendrons find
Something wooing, something suing in the crooning of the
wind.

And its sing-song never ceases, for the wind will have its
will
In the green Bermudan valley, on the green Bermudan hill,
Come the dawn across the water with its shifting peacock
dyes,
Or the pageant of the planets marching up the midnight
skies.

Oh, the wind is in the bamboos with its immemorial
strain,

Sweeping like the tides of slumber from the haunted
Spanish Main ;

I may not escape its magic ; it will gyve me, it will bind,
And my spirit will forever be a thrall unto the wind.

CLINTON SCOLLARD.

THE LITTLE LANE

MY lane is greener than the lovely gown
Guinevere chose when Lancelot fled the town,
Softer than emeralds she gaily wore
To hide from Arthur all the shame she bore.

After five elms close press two apple trees,
That scatter blossom-largesse on the knees of tangled
thorn

Where little wrens are born ;
And hidden there are minstrels' galleries,
Where Masters, worthy of an Emperor's fees,
Sing with the voice of thrush or nightingale
To all the clouds that sail

The sky ;
There, little winds, made captive, love to lie
Swinging the grass innumerable hours
Drowsy with fragrance from the hedgerow flowers.

So when the Eve within me cozens me,
Twists in my heart her two-edged Jealousy,
Or sets my hand to Hatred's battering-ram,
Or brings unto Pride's gallows all I am,
Then when my spirit's highest, fairest towers
Are tumbled lower than the wildest flowers,
Love calls me homewards down a little lane,
Sweet with green grass and trees and blessed rain,
Where I find peace and am made whole again.

A. D. L. WILSON.

THE FUNCTION OF POETRY

I VENTURE, in this paper, to put forward a theory of the Function of Poetry. It is not new, but is substantially that of Sir Walter Scott, in contradistinction to the metaphysical theories of Coleridge and Shelley. But it is a theory somewhat modified from that of Scott.

Scott's approach to poetry is from the historic standpoint. "Poets," he says in his introduction to the *Bridal of Triermain*, "under various denominations of Bards, Scalds, Chroniclers, and so forth, are the first historians of all nations." The sole modification which I seek to make in this paper is that they should remain so always. History would afford our modern poets a subject-matter of which they are sorely in need. Take the late Mr. Flecker. He seems to have searched heaven and earth for a subject for his poetry, and finally to have pitched on the *Golden Journey to Samarkand*. I did not know Mr. Flecker; but I remember seeing him walking in the Broad, when he was an undergraduate. His poetry always gives me the impression that he had crossed the street and gone into a fruit merchant's. Returning with some candied fruits to Trinity, and taking down Arnold's *Sick King in Bokhara*, he proceeded to interpolate his newly-purchased fruits into this poem, and so created a new repast. I do not suppose he did; but I remember hearing he was on the look-out for subjects for poetry. And the result—for me—is that, having nothing else to write about, he wrote about the shops, with a little legendary trimming.

Flecker is better than most modern poets. They have no subject whatever. Hence their laboured phraseology. This may, or may not, have come in with Rossetti. But Rossetti is certainly a poet who is seldom content with a plain word. Wordsworth said that there was no distinction between the language of poetry and of prose. Hence it is possible to read Wordsworth all day and every day. His poetry is as nutritious and wholesome as bread. But Rossetti's is an elaborate confectionery. So is the verse of most modern poets. Francis Thompson's *Hound of Heaven*

is intolerable. He seems to have ransacked some unknown Catholic glossary, and added to his beautiful words of ritual some exceedingly ugly words.

Poetry, if it is to have a subject and a language, should return to Homer. A historical subject, even if indifferently narrated, has a better chance of surviving in literature than an unhistoric subject better narrated. The *Loss of the Royal George* will always be read. It is bound up with English history. But who cares anything about the *Earthly Paradise*? It has not "vitality enough to keep it sweet." It is manna that already stinketh.

For narration in the style of Homer, there are many epic subjects. There is thus the struggle of Nelson with France, culminating with Nelson's death in the moment of victory. That is as good a conclusion as the death of Hector in the *Iliad*, and better than the death of Turnus in the *Æneid*. William Morris said that the *Volsung Saga* is the great English epic. But it is too remote. Who can remember who many of the characters are? But who can forget who Hardy was?

Next to Homer, modern poetry should study Pindar. Who are the men whose doings are studied in every detail by the majority of the English race? The English and Australian cricketers. Cricket is the most æsthetic of pursuits. Physical fitness is the best of all sensations—a day's cricket, followed by a bath and a change, and then the reading of Shelley, who appears to have lived in the height of physical training. No poet is of the first order who is not highly trained—Homer, who no doubt took part in the Trojan expedition; Dante, who was lean; Milton, who fenced. These were the three "sons of light." Homer is swift, according to Matthew Arnold. Matthew Arnold is slow: he climbed Cumnor hills too slowly.

Of all things known to man, nothing is better than physical and intellectual fitness. It should be the object of physical science to maintain this. War should be abolished; and the activities of mankind spent in making men immune from disease.

Poetry has its subjects in the athletes and in the cauldron of Medea. The Argonauts sought Colchis. They were the Greek athletes; and they have been celebrated by Pindar. In Colchis they found the Golden Age of immortal youth.

Immortal youth should be secured by physical science. Whilst we await that consummation, the modern poets have their heroes in the modern cricketers. If they would write of Hell, let them take the last War. All soldiers, according to Saint Augustine, are condemned to Hell. That is where they live.

T. E. CASSON.

A FAT LADY WALKS ABROAD

SHE comes ponderously on,
A great moving hill of flesh :
Her skirts wide, long and ample,
Hide flat and monstrous feet.
Well set upon her massive form
Is poised a great fair face,
With chins incredible ;
In rolling fair-skinned folds they lie,
Obscuring all her neck.
Straight is her nose and good,
But from its sides there peer
Furtive watchful eyes of blue ;
Cold unsmiling eyes—
Small, restless, trustless—
Full of greed and double dealing.
Her clothes are rich and manifold :
Upon her hair,
In colour like to light pale straw,
Many plumed, enormous, is a hat
Larger than the woods which crown
The clappers of the Chilterns.
And when this wonder walks abroad
She moves upon the earth
With a motion like a full-rigged ship.

ESTHER SAMMS.

"IN A GREEN FIELD "

(From the Greek)

Julian Grenfell, killed in Action, 1915.

I DREAMED they buried him in a green field,
Barely three feet below,
That he might hear the tides of grasses flow
Laden with merchant bees and butterflies
By blossom anchored over his closed eyes,
That he might know both sun and moon
Whisper behind a July haze at noon :
. . . In a green field

Where the dear, steadfast stars
Seek him till dewdrops glint like scimitars,
Hung on a wall as memories of old wars.

I dreamed they buried him in a green field,
Where sleek, brown mares at rest
Still roll delightedly above his breast,
And foals with rapid, playful sound
Stamp greetings to him underground.

I dreamed they buried him in a green field.

A. D. L. WILSON.

ROUND STRASBURG

WE took a walk, my love and I, at noon ;
A faint-gold light rained down upon the town
And over the fields—the green fields and the brown,
While through great trees just filmed the faint, full moon.
So delicate was their tracery of maroon,
It seemed fine threaded sea-weed pasted down
Over a tinted page. The freshet's frown,
Far made away, was shadowed to a croon.
I thought : O peaceful little houses seen
Through thin, late verdure, and O swinging green
Of curved white river swept beyond the lace
Of nimble trees, where is your like to me ?—
It is in sweet England, and I love to see
In lands remote the mirror of her grace.

HELENA DEREZINSKA.

THE POETRY OF INTUITION

INTUITION is illumination of the spirit : an unreasoned knowledge that is not quite the same as Insight, which is mental penetration and usually conscious. These two attributes are interwoven in our being, and they are subject to the development of our conception of the universe and its relation to life.

We are more or less inclined, in varying degree, to cloud this valuable sense of Intuition by much attention to detail of no vital import, by selfishness and hypercriticism that also means lack of reasoned toleration. So we have need for retaining a part of our childhood's soul, which is very intuitive until shadowed by self-consciousness.

Intuition discovers the thought that lies hidden in our material mind and, with the aid of Art, guides it to a more clear and spiritual form of self-expression. Let us, then, tread the flowery path of Imagination, hand in hand with Intuition and Insight, and place no barrier of earth to impede the oncoming steps of Perfection. As in Life, so in Poetry : one is inseparable from the other. Poetry is Intuition, Life is Insight, and the presentation of this duality the poet interprets in accordance with his power of reproduction.

True poetry is simply the result of an essence, or centre-point of intuition, woven into an elusive colour-pattern of words, and symbolises a recognition of some reality or unreality to which life is continually pointing. The quality of this essence is dependent on our mental attitude towards a conception of truth.

The art of poesy should be so delicate that even the strongest forces therein are lightly handled. Birds on the wing are light, and why not thoughts that fly in transmuted spheres to return later in guise of words ? Can we not cause a sense of fleeting to pervade the chosen form of our verse ? Can we not convey a complete impression of incompleteness ? According to Wordsworth, poetry lives in the transitory world where much is represented in little.

The mighty oak from an acorn towers ;
A tiny seed can fill a field with flowers ;

One bell alone tolls out the death of kings ;
In every Sussex skylark Shelley sings.

(CHARLES DALMON.)

If any measure is applied to intuition, it is certainly not one of length. There is a flash, and away it flies. We clothe the flash for others to disentangle as they will. Possibly many people never quite honestly enjoy a long poem, however much a masterpiece: to them it is an occasion for no desire for discipline, only an impatience to find the flash or main inspiration. From many single lines or couplets in one poem alone rare poetical gems can be cut. An instance is Francis Thompson's *Hound of Heaven*, in which there are lines that haunt the mind and await rebirth therefrom :

I stood amid the dust of mounded years,
I shook the pillaring hours.
Yet ever and anon a trumpet sounds
From the hid battlements of Eternity.

Shelley and Keats have given us long and entire descriptions of their feelings aroused by autumn, whereas Paul Verlaine has expressed his in a few words only.

The long-drawn wailing
From the violins
Of Autumn
Rend my heart
With languishing
Monotony.
When the hour sounds,
I, breathless and pale,
The old days recall,
And I weep.
Then I am borne away
Tempestuously
Onward, beyond,
As a dead leaf.

If we are moved by the beauty of one of Nature's simple pictures, and desire to draw from it a spiritual analogy, it need not be done in this way :

The sun is very bright,
 And the sky is blue :
 Now there is no more night
 And life is yet true.

The following poem, *Two Gardens*, by a girl of fourteen, would not be so effective if it were longer :

The Virgin had a garden
 In far Galilee,
 There grew lilies, roses, lilies,
 Lilies for her stainless purity,
 And Rosemary.

Jesus had a garden
 On Mount Calvary,
 Thorns were there for His adorning,
 Angry faces terrible to see,
 And crosses three.

Edgar Allan Poe declares that a poem is not a poem unless it is short. Would Milton have Lost and Regained his Paradise sooner if he had reduced and simplified his visions ? In his sonnets, however, his intuition is plainly revealed. The fourteenth sonnet is not so often quoted as the others, and is on the *Religious Memory of a Friend* :

When faith and Love which parted from thee never,
 Had ripened thy just soul to dwell with God,
 Meekly thou didst resign this earthly load
 Of Death called Life, which us from life doth sever.
 Thy Works and Alms and all thy good Endeavour
 Staid not behind, nor in the grave were trod ;
 But as Faith pointed with her golden rod,
 Followed thee up to joy and bliss for ever.
 Love led them on, and Faith, who knew them best
 Thy handmaids, clad them o'er with purple beams
 And azure wings, that up they flew so drest,
 And speak the truth of thee on glorious themes
 Before the Judge, who thenceforth bade thee rest
 And take thy fill of pure immortal streams.

We have the example of the Japanese, who well realise the simple purpose of poetry ; they know that with something kept in reserve Art steps in with her enhancement of beauty and suggestion. Who would not wish to exchange

souls with a Japanese artist after reading some word-picture of his ?

High mountains and
The sea indeed—
The one goes on being a mountain,
Always just as solid ;
The other goes on being the sea,
And will never be anything else.
But man is a flower-like thing,
Man of this fleeting world.

In their brevity they are at one with the Chinese :

She asks why I perch in the jade green hills,
I smile and do not answer. My heart is comfortable and at peace.
Fallen peach-flowers spread out widely, widely over the water :
It is another sky and earth, not the world of men.

Is it not apparent other nations value poetic simplicity more than we do ?

Probably some of those people who say they do not care for poetry have been fed with traditional fare—the best known and extended productions of the Spirit of Poetry's greatest pupils. If there is a wish to follow a system it would be better to find the tiny gems first.

In a recent magazine a correspondent mentioned that form must not master intuition, which is the living spirit of the poem. Intuition is supreme, although heed must be taken in order not to make a muddle of it. It is not implied that good form is to be neglected, but it must be subordinate. Intuition in poetry should not be clouded by words: the living spirit of the poem—this is a phrase for remembrance.

William Blake is exceptionally intuitive. The simplicity of Robert Burns is very evident. Robert Herrick pleads for his lovely *Blossoms* and *Daffodils* ; Thomas Gray for his *Elegy* ; and Thomas Hood for his *Song of the Shirt*, although they ought to be disqualified by length. Walt Whitman, that pioneer of unrhymed verse by no means brief, also cannot be omitted from the list that need never be ended. George Meredith insists that his *Dirge in Woods* should be heard :

A wind sways the pines,
 And below
 Not a breath of wild air ;
 Still as the mosses that glow
 On the flooring and over the lines
 Of the roots here and there.
 The pine-tree drops its dead ;
 They are quiet as under the sea.
 Overhead, overhead
 Rushes life in a race,
 As the clouds the clouds chase ;
 And we go,
 And we drop like the fruits of the tree,
 Even so,
 Even we.

And in Walter Scott remember the subtle meaning of *Proud Maisie*.

Among the clamouring throng of present-day poets Walter de la Mare has a good place, though his intuition belongs rather to a shadowy dreamland peculiarly his own than to the realities of everyday life. Alfred Noyes should have a higher enthronement, as so much of his inspiration is derived from life itself. Often he proves Matthew Arnold's saying, "Poetry is a criticism of life," but most of his poems would be more impressive if half the length. The first verse of his *Paradox* is complete in itself :

All that is broken shall be mended ;
 All that is lost shall be found ;
 I will bind up every wound .
 When that which is begun shall be ended.
 Not peace I brought among you, but a sword
 To divide the night from the day,
 When I sent My Words forth in their battle-array
 To die and to live,
 To give and receive,
 Saith the Lord.

William Davies is a sympathetic and brief intuitive poet. As he says in his foreword, some of the lyrics therein have been discovered for the first time. Every poet, however limited, has the power to claim at least one miniature of

true poetry, if life has borne it towards him on the wind of inspiration.

Present-day poetry does now tend towards short simplicity, and any peculiarity of its form corresponds with the curiosities one is occasionally confronted with in the world of palette and brush. In truth this movement is not a new nor a forward one, but a stepping backward to the simple life of Man before the Fall. Nevertheless, the Fall has so enriched material and spiritual experience that intuitive thought may now be robed in raiment of beauty which reflects, and thereby acknowledges, the primeval. This idea can be followed in *The Making of a Poem*, by Alfred Noyes :

Last night a passionate tempest shook his soul
With hatred and black anger and despair,
And the dark depths and every foaming shoal
Ran wild as if they fought with the blind air.

To-day the skies unfold their flags of blue,
The crisp white clouds their sails of snow unfurl,
And, on the shore, in colours rich and new,
The strange green seas cast up their loosened pearl.

G. M. MARRIAGE.

DREAMS

DREAMS—twilight dreams—
Magic power—
Have ye felt the lure
Of the glamour-hour ?
Do your dreams come true ?
Do ye dream and do ?
Or (if in the woof there's a thread too fine),
Are your dreams as vain and as mad as mine ?

I.

For instance—Gold.
I sit at my window

Dreaming of Gold,
 And what I would do with it,
 What I could make with it,
 What I could take with it,
 Buying new birth with it,
 Gaining the earth with it.
 Dreams of Gold—
 Scenes unfold—
 Beauty,
 Ease,
 Change,
 Music,
 Warmth,
 Friends.

I laugh,
 I rock,
 I mock,
 At the folly of it,
 Melancholy of it !
 ME and GOLD ! For instance.

II.

For instance—Love.
 I sit at my window
 Dreaming of Love.
 And oh, the strong arms of him.
 How I would meet with him,
 Haste away fleet with him,
 Joy in the truth of him,
 Radiance and youth of him.
 Dreams of Love
 Glamour-wove.
 Kisses,
 Words,
 Gifts,
 Passion,
 Flame,
 Bliss.

THE POETRY REVIEW

I laugh,
 I rock,
 I mock,
 At the vanity of it,
 The insanity of it !
 ME and LOVE ! For instance.

III.

For instance—Power.
 I sit at my window
 Dreaming of Power,
 And a universe won with it.
 Lifting up men with it,
 Blotting out pain with it,
 Leading the throng with it,
 Righting each wrong with it.
 Dreams of Power,
 Glory's hour.
 Honour,
 Praise,
 Fame,
 Dominion,
 Worlds,
 Men.

I laugh
 I rock
 I mock,
 At the sadness of it,
 Utter madness of it !
 ME and POWER ! For instance !!!

Ye who read,
 Do ye heed ?
 Is your woof as fine ?
 Are your dreams as vain and as mad as mine ?
 MINA CHARLOTTE MARTIN.

MODERN GREEK POETRY—III

SOLOMOS : KALVOS

WHILE in the Peloponnesus and Continental Greece under the Turkish yoke there was a deep ignorance among the people, and the few good schools at Jannina, Mount Athos, Chios, Smyrna and Patmos supplied an education suitable only for priests and teachers, in the Ionian Islands—which, after the Frankish invasion, remained chiefly under the rule of the Venetian republic up to its abolition by Bonaparte—a considerable civilisation had been preserved and developed. After the fall of Crete (in 1669) many Cretans found refuge in Cerigo and Zante, bringing with them Byzantine painting and Cretan poetry. The higher education of the noble class in the towns was carried on in Italian; but great preachers, like Elias Miniatis (1669–1714) and Nikephoros Theotokis (1736–1800), speaking and writing excellent Greek, kept the orthodox sentiment of the people alive. On the other hand, the tyrannical methods of the Venetians stirred up hatred against them, especially among the peasants, and thus a Greek national feeling always existed. When the French General Gentilly occupied Corfu (1797), Manzaros the *πρωτοπαπᾶς* (first priest) of the town, when receiving him, offered him as an acceptable gift and an eloquent address, Homer's *Odyssey*. Many young Ionians who journeyed to Italy in order to learn law and medicine, with which philosophy was then connected, returned with good diplomas from its universities. Two Zantiotes, who went to Italy shortly before 1809, when England occupied Zante, brought back to Greece an exquisite poetical art. They were ANDREAS KALVOS and DIONYSIUS SOLOMOS—the former born in 1792 and the latter in 1798. Before them another Zantiote, the son of a Dalmatian, 14 years older than Kalvos, had established himself in Italy and become famous. His name was Niccolò, which he changed into Ugo Foscolo.

Foscolo was renowned both as a patriot and a poet. In 1807 he published his *Sepolcri*, and in 1809 he delivered his inaugural lecture as a Professor of Rhetoric in the University of Pavia. This took the form of a patriotic exhortation

to the youth of Italy, and its immediate result was a decree of Napoleon by which the Chair of Rhetoric was abolished in all the universities of Italy.

When Kalvos, who was the son of a Corfiote peasant, found himself without means of support, he appealed to his illustrious compatriot. Foscolo wrote to his friends in Zante and besought the Zantiote community to assist Kalvos. The appeal not having met with a satisfactory response, Foscolo took Kalvos into his own home. In the same year (1813), Foscolo went to live in Switzerland, whither he was accompanied by Kalvos.

In Switzerland the two Zantiote poets lived together for about three years, a remarkable circumstance to those who knew the temperament of both men. Foscolo, while in Switzerland, wrote a bitter satire against his literary adversaries and against his friends. When Foscolo came to England in 1816, Kalvos, who was then 24 years of age, again accompanied him. The letters of Foscolo show that he appreciated the exceptional talent and the upright character of Kalvos.

But they were not long in London until they quarrelled. It is difficult to say which of the two men was the more capricious. We only know that Foscolo lost favour with his English friends as well. After distinguishing himself in the literary circles in London, he fell into poverty. In vain he offered his services to the Greek Government. After being imprisoned for debt, Foscolo died at Turnham Green in 1827. In 1871 the Italians erected to his memory an imposing tomb in the Santa Croce of Florence, where the son of Zante sleeps beside the greatest of Italy's sons.

Kalvos was wiser than his compatriot. As a teacher he lived in London with his English wife. But after the outbreak of the Greek war of independence and the death of his wife he sailed for Greece.

Before continuing, however, the biography of Kalvos, let us turn to that of Solomos.

Solomos travelled to Italy in far greater comfort than did Kalvos. He was the son of a Conte who had a Cretan origin, and he inherited a considerable fortune when he was

only nine years old. In the following year he was sent to Venice, accompanied by an Italian tutor. For ten years he studied in Italy whatever subject he chose. The fact of his being an orphan and his noble birth left his natural inclination free play. The young Count worked very little, but the little that he did was done with all his heart. All through his life he was the same, his income being sufficient to save him from taking part in the struggle of life, which had vanquished Kalvos.

In Pavia the Count studied—or, rather, did not study—law. But in rhetoric he was the equal of Foscolo, whom he admired. He loved to recite Vergil—a practice at that time fashionable in Italy—and to extemporise verses, another favourite pastime. His Italian teachers were delighted with him. One of them said to him: “*Greco, tu farai dimenticare il nostro Monti.*”

Vicenzo Monti (1754–1826) was at that time considered the first poet of Italy, and Solomos often paid visits to him at Milan. It appears that he even contradicted the master and gave him poetical precepts, as this: “One’s mind must first strongly conceive something and afterwards the heart feel strongly what the mind has conceived.” Solomos adhered to this principle all his life, thereby greatly limiting his poetical fecundity.

I mention these particulars in order to demonstrate that both Zantiote poets had the good fortune to study Italian literature “from the mouth of its creators.” They also made a profound study of Latin prose and poetry and kept in close touch with the literary movement of their time. But they were even more fortunate in living in Italy at the time when an attempt was made for the regeneration of Italian literature through the ancient Greek poetry. The Italians, tired of French classicism, were at that moment turning to the genuine classic source. Homer, and especially the *Iliad*, was studied in the original by the best of the Italian poets and produced much discussion.

The *Iliad* was translated by Cesarotti in prose, and afterwards by Monti in verses which were considered classical. But Foscolo, who knew Greek well, thought

that he had a better right. In 1807 he published at Brescia a volume containing the three translations of the first rhapsody of the *Iliad*—his own, Cesarotti's and that of Monti, to whom he dedicated the book. "You confessed," he said to Monti, "that you completed the translation *senza grammatica greca*." As a matter of fact, Foscolo knew that Monti had been assisted in his Greek by Moustoxidis, a young and learned Greek of Corfu. And when Foscolo quarrelled with Monti he called him "*traduttore del traduttore d'Omero*."

All this was a splendid lesson for Kalvos and Solomos. The poet judged was Homer, their Homer, and the book their *Iliad*. It followed that they should both attempt to translate it into modern Greek, although both of them, quickly realising the magnitude of the task, did not proceed beyond ten verses. But they had at least been taught the superiority of Greek poetry, and they acquired that national fanaticism which is indispensable to poets destined to be loved by a nation. The Greeks called them great before their work had time to be thoroughly appreciated. It is undeniable that both were enlightened and conscious artists, that they aimed at a high poetry, and that they successfully surpassed numerous difficulties in their time. Thus their name and their work will not be forgotten.

In 1818 Solomos returned to Zante and immediately began to devote himself to the composition of verse and the study of Greek. His disposition did not permit him to study the whole Greek language systematically, and his knowledge of ancient grammar appears to have been about on a level with that of Monti. But here he showed himself a poet. Villaras and Christopoulos were influenced rather by practical considerations. Solomos perceived that the attempt of amending the later forms was chiefly unartistic. Fauriel's Introduction to the popular poetry consolidated his convictions. The folk-verses and Villaras' poems enriched his vocabulary. In his prose Dialogue he combated the method of the famous Coray. He adored Greece like Coray, but more poetically, and his searching gaze was bent on the future rather than the past.

Fortunately, in the meantime Greece proved to all the poets of the world that she merited their love. The flame of rebellion blazed in the Peloponnesus and the Greeks succeeded in avenging Turkish atrocities by achievements worthy of Greek soil and Greek sea. The young poets of Paris, led by Victor Hugo, the German poets, and especially Wilhelm Müller, and the Dioscuri of English lyric poetry admired the new Leonidas and Cimon.

The little Greek poets made haste to proceed to Nauplia—Kalvos from London, Tertsetis from Italy, Soutsos from Paris, although they all were useless as combatants. The twenty-three-year-old Conte, who knew himself better, remained on in Zante. But his emotion was so intense that with the Greek he had by then contrived to acquire (he had already written some brief fine poems), he composed in May, 1823, the poem which afterwards has been adopted as a Greek national anthem.

This hymn, like everything else that Solomos wrote, is full of animation and of movement. It begins with that noble invocation to Liberty, with that cry of anguish, which has lately been admirably expressed in English verse by Rudyard Kipling.

Ἄπ' τὰ κόκκαλα βγαλμένη
τῶν Ἑλλήνων τὰ ἱερά
καὶ σάν πρῶτ' ἀνδρειωμένη
χαῖρε ὦ χαῖρε ἐλευθεριά.

“O thou, who comest out of the holy tombs of the (ancient) Hellenes, brave as of old, hail, O hail, Liberty.”

The 158 trochaic stanzas succeed one another briskly and without pause; the reader is unconsciously carried away by the rapture of the poet, who runs in exaltations, denouncing and threatening with one breath, chanting warlike songs and then launching forth into irony and maledictions. The description of the fight of Tripolitza makes one dizzy.

Ἀκούω κούφια τὰ τουφέκια
Ἀκούω σμίξιμο σπαθιῶν
Ἀκούω ξύλ' ἀκούω πελέκια
Ἀκούω τρίξιμο δοντιῶν

Ἄ! τί νύκτα ἦτον ἐκείνη,
 Ποῦ τήν τρέμει ὁ λογισμός,
 Ἄλλος ὕπνος δέν ἐγίνη
 Πάρεξ θάνατος πικρός.

But much more beautiful is the end :

Σάν ποτάμι τό αἶμα ἐγίνη
 καί κυλάει στήν λαγκαδιά
 Καί τὰ θῶο χόρτο πίνει
 Αἰμ' ἀντίς γιά τή δροσιά.

Τῆς αὐγῆς δροσᾶτο ἀέρι
 Δέν φουσᾶς τώρα ἐσύ πιο
 Στῶν ψευδόπιστων τᾶστέρι
 φύσα, φύσα στό σταυρό.

This poetical daybreak is like a symbol of Liberty.

When the hymn had been completed by Solomos, Tricoupis, a friend of his and of Lord Byron, went to Missolonghi on purpose to read it to the great poet. But, alas! he found Byron dead, and he had only to deliver a splendid funeral oration. Since then Solomos was for a year writing another poem in the same metre, called "A Lyric Poem to the Death of Lord Byron." The best of its stanzas are those in which he represents Byron standing like a cypress near the tomb of Marco Botsaris (109-115).

But was Solomos really *βαρὺς ὕμνων χαλκευτής* (a stodgy maker of hymns), as the Greek revolution had obliged him to become? Both in his youth and in later life he was justly admired by his Greek, English and Italian friends, and his works have always been praised. Dora d'Istria called him a child of Rome and Athens. Dietrich compares some of his works to poems of Schiller. Krumbacher called his *Hymn to Liberty* "berühmt" (famous). Alessandro Manzoni (according to Typaldos) considered Solomos a genius, and said that Liberty had never found a greater singer.

In order to characterise him, however, I would remark that Solomos's Muse was not, as one might suppose, a warlike Muse. The enthusiasm of Solomos was rather a feminine sensitiveness, of which the poet himself was conscious and which he endeavoured to restrain. There-

fore, while he did not attempt to portray the trenchant features of any hero of mountain or sea, whose bravery he admired, he has nevertheless left a series of dainty feminine and juvenile types of varied but always natural psychological expression. It is worthy of note that he did not even give utterance to his sympathy with these tender creatures—the poet used to conceal his own love—it was *their* sentiments that he depicted. One would think that his soul is identified with theirs. The Ἀγνώριστη (the “Unknown Girl”), ἡ Ξανθοῦλλα (the “Little Fair Girl”), all the little βοσκοὶ and βοσκοπούλλες (Shepherds), Εὐρυκόμη, Ψυχούλλα, Φραγκίσκα, Φραιζέρ, and his more extensive creations Μαρία, Αὐγοῦλλα and Ἀνθός are expressions of juvenile and feminine feeling from the most pathetic to the slightly comical. His consolatory poems on the occasion of the death of relatives and friends, and his dread of the grave, are more characteristic of his native country.

Into all these productions Solomos admirably infuses different shades of emotion; and while one is charmed by the simplicity and cohesion of the sketch, the delicacy and vivacity of expression recall Metastasio's stanzas. Here we see how well the popular language served Solomos and Solomos served the popular language. Other poets also and Vicenzos Cornaros, the great poet of Crete, first of all, utilised the wealth of their dialects. But Solomos, like an expert, weighed every word, noted its sound and tried a variety of metrical forms, so that the feeling, the rhythm and the words were welded into one. Work of this description is really creative. That is why Solomos, while composing improvised sonnets in Italian, used to model and remodel his Greek verses.

How Solomos understood Greek art! He used often to say “This is Greek art; the other is not.” In his time ideas regarding Greek art were lazy; but it appears that Solomos meant “*cette finesse a dégager la ligne unique et nécessaire qui évoque la vie*,” as M. Paul Bourget defines it. Thus he acquired the art of the old epigrammatists. Never since the time of the elegant epigrams of Agathias and Paul Silentarius did Greek verses contain so much senti-

ment and meaning. The six-line epigram upon the Destruction of Psara resembles that little island, and gives an impressive idea of its heroic end. Glory, whom the poet personifies, is a pathetic female figure in an unrivalled setting.

Στῶν Ψαρῶν τήν ὀλόμαυρη ῥάχι
 Περπατῶντας ἡ Δόξα μονάχη
 Μελετᾷ τά λαμπρὰ παλληκάρια
 Καὶ στήν κόμη στεφάνι φορεῖ
 Γινομέν' ἀπό λίγα χορτάρια
 Ποῦχαν μένει στήν ἔρημη γῆ

“On the black rock of Psara Glory ranges alone. She studies the deeds of the heroes. On her hair she wears a crown; it is woven of a few herbs, which were left on the deserted land.”

After the destruction of Psara another tragedy kept the Greeks in a long agony. Missolonghi was besieged a second time by the Turks. Solomos contemplated the siege from Zante, which was shaken by the cannon of the besiegers. And when, after the failure of Kutakhi Pasha, Ibrahim Pasha, the Egyptian Attila, undertook to destroy that home of heroes, the poet was a fellow sufferer of the besieged. But when a year later the remnant of the garrison, with their women and children in the centre, all armed and worn to a shadow by hunger, endeavoured to cut a passage through the foe and the wounded blew themselves into the air, at the sight of that sublime sacrifice it was not Solomos alone who wept. In Paris Charles the Tenth, appearing on the balcony of his palace at night, assured his people that he meant “to follow the Greeks to Constantinople.”

Solomos was ambitious of becoming the Tasso of the siege, and after retiring in 1828 to Corfu he devoted himself to the construction of his poetical monument. In spite of it all, he did not compose an epic poem. Nothing was less suited to his genius than a long narrative. For Solomos, as for Edgar Allan Poe, “a long poem does not exist,” but merely a series of short ones. Solomos, after changing his residence from Zante to Corfu, and finding himself in the most poetical landscape of Europe and amongst the learned

men of the Guildford Academy, sought a new, higher and more complex art. The change he underwent at that time is evident. His Zantiote style was a reminiscence of the Italian masters. Now he turned towards the new German art—the music of Mozart and Beethoven and the artistic theories of Schiller and Schelling. But it seems that it was above all else the triumphs of Goethe which did not permit Solomos, like all his contemporary poets, to sleep. Therefore he sought a kind of blend of poetry and metaphysics, of classical and romantic art. His heroes should be mere symbols. The title of his epic poem was at first *Χρέος* (Duty) and afterwards *Ἐλεύθεροι πολιορκημένοι* (Freemen besieged). According to the poet's notes the poem ought to be a "self-existing world, mathematically laid but rich and deep—at the background Greece and her future." The poet exhorts himself to study the works of Aeschylus, and especially *Prometheus*. Apparently he imagined Missolonghi to be a sort of Caucasus.

Did Solomos manage to complete his monument?

In his manuscripts nothing but sketches have been preserved, in which he changes metres and rejects the rhyme after all. His friends believed that his completed manuscript was stolen. That many of his sketches have been lost is probable, but it is self evident that a poet so fastidious about details would grow weary of a scheme executed in so many complicated combinations. It appears that the most difficult part of the mathematical problem, which tortured Solomos, was how to combine his hazy and exalted conception with the innate Greek perspicuity and the Zantiote sensitiveness.

As neither the *Freemen Besieged* nor the *Κρητικὸς* (the Cretan), the *Carmen Seculare*, nor any other ambitious poem which Solomos undertook on such lines ever came to end, it is difficult to understand what these lines were or to define them. The fragments, especially the beginning of the end of the third sketch and *ὁ Πειρασμός* (the Temptation), where the beauties of nature invite the besieged to surrender, contain an untranslatable and deep mystery. They are like the night he describes: *Νύχτα*

γεμάτη θάματα, νύχτα σπαρμένη μάγια. ("A night ful' of marvels, a night sown with magic.") Such verses and extracts will ever be studied in Greece like the sketches of a great painter and will probably create in future the poetry of which the poet dreamed.

It is true that Solomos listened to the suggestion of his admirers that he had in Greece a mission similar to that which Dante fulfilled in Italy. But Dante was strong and indomitable. Solomos was neither strong nor persevering, nor even ambitious. He was a noble nature, *anima candida*, and when he died in 1857 the people mourned him like a father.

II.

Kalvos had a much stronger character. Probably it was naturally such, but it is certain that Switzerland and England made him Puritanic, and thus he stands quite separated from the other Ionians.

We know that Kalvos had translated historical and doctrinal works relating to the Church of England. As he was not successful in Greece, he returned to the West and published ten Odes at Geneva in 1824. That volume was translated immediately into French by an Orientalist, Stanilas Julien. Two years later the poet published in Paris other ten Odes in the same metre, and these were translated into French by another Orientalist, Pauthier de Censay. Kalvos afterwards returned to Corfu, but, as he was not immediately appointed professor in the Ionian Academy he is said to have refused every other offer. Later he accepted the Chair of Philosophy, but he resigned it before long; it appears that he objected to the applause of the students, and most of all to that which was accorded to his colleagues. Kalvos was therefore considered as a typical eccentric. It is said that he liked dark surroundings. He left Greece and returned to England, and notwithstanding his sixty-seven years he married a second English lady and died in 1867 in London; but I do not think that anyone knows the tomb of this singular man.

A good deal of caprice also distinguishes his poetry. In

contrast with Solomos, Kalvos appears in nearly every one of his odes with his principles and his demands. Although the patrician Solomos descended to the people, the plebeian Kalvos addressed himself to the few—those whom he desired to exercise in virtue. His reader must know metre, and especially Kalvos's own, and must tolerate his discords and his grammar. He must know the ancient mythology, and first and foremost he must be attentive. While the poems of Solomos circulate among the people, the odes of Kalvos are read with difficulty and are scarcely to be understood at first. It is superfluous to say that few Greeks submitted themselves to such an exercise.

By those means Kalvos endeavoured earnestly in the third decade of the nineteenth century to resuscitate the ancient lyric poetry, especially in its highest form, as he himself understood it. It is known that forty years later in Italy Giosue Carducci attempted the same thorough return to Greek antiquity. As in many places their steps met in the ancient grove it will not be out of place to draw a brief comparison between them.

It seems to me that they both knew the Greek lyric poetry through the medium of Horace, and they chose as their motto the first line of Book III of the *Odes*: *Odi profanum vulgus et arceo*.

They both rejected the new rime and employed the external form of the Latin poet. Like him, they did not desire that the meaning should finish with the verse, and they rejected, as Kalvos said, "the barbarism of the rime." But though Carducci tried so many metres and strophes, the Puritanical Kalvos wanted an indefinite number (676 kinds) with the same metre.

Here we must remember that before Kalvos, his teacher Foscolo had turned towards Greek poetry, but he understood it differently. He stated that "*Ho desunto questo modo di poesia da' Greci, i quali dalle antiche tradizioni traevano sentenze morali e politiche presentandole non al sillogismo di lettore, ma alla fantasia ed al cuore*" ("I have borrowed this kind of poetry from the Greeks, who from the ancient traditions deduced moral and political sentences, presenting them

not to the mind of the reader but to his fancy and his heart.”)

On the contrary, Kalvos wishes to touch, appealing himself directly to the mind of the reader and not to the heart, which must remain unmoved. It has been very justly remarked that Foscolo's *Sepolcri*, with the deep melancholy that breathes through it from beginning to end, led to romanticism, while Kalvos, like Carducci, detested romanticism. He worshipped Greek scenery, the pure atmosphere and the beautiful light of Parnassus, and he understood that in presence of such grandeur morbid sensitiveness is out of place.

His particular art agrees first with his phlegmatic style. His images are entirely ancient. He represents even new things as ancient. In order to say that he had visited London and Paris, he says :

θ'
Ἀδeiaζει ἐπὶ τὰς ὄχθας
τοῦ κλεινοῦ Ταμησοῦ
καὶ δύναμιν καὶ δόξαν
καὶ πλοῦτον ἀναρίθμητον
τό' Ἀμαλθεῖον.

ί'
Ἐκεῖ τό αἰόλιον φύσημα
μ' ἔφερεν· ἢ ἀκτῖνες
μ' ἔθρεψαν, μέ ἀνάθρεψαν
τῆς ὑπερ γλυκντάτης
ἐλευθερίας.

ια'
Κα. τοὺς ναοὺς σου ἐθαύμασα,
Τῶν Κελτῶν ἱερὰ
Πόλις· τοῦ λόγου ποία,
Ποία ἀπὸ σέ τοῦ πνεύματος
λείπει Ἀφροδίτη;

“Amaltheja's horn empties power and glory and boundless wealth on the banks of the illustrious Tamesis.

“The Aeolian breeze wafted me there; and Liberty's beams have warmed me.

“I have admired also thy temples, O holy town of the Celts; what grace of word or of mind is absent from thee ?”

He calls Hydra and Psara

Σκοπέλους
ὅπου ποτὲ δέν ἀραξε
Φόβος κινδύνου.

“Rocks, where no fear of danger has ever anchored.”

He describes the Turkish invasion as follows (V, 23) :—

ὅταν εἰς τὴν ἀθλίαν
Ἑλλάδ' ἀπὸ τὴν ἔσχατην
τῆς Ἐρυθρᾶς θαλάσσης
τῶν ἀραβίων πετάλων
ἦλθεν ὁ κτύπος.

“When the clatter of the Arabian horseshoes have reached poor Greece from the extremes of the Red Sea.”

He admirably represents the slavery of Greece in the following stanza (X, 14) :—

Ἡ χώρα τότ' ἐφαίνετο
Ναός ἡρειπομένος
Ὅπου οἱ ψαλμοὶ σιγᾶουσι
Καί τοῦ κισσοῦ τ' ἀτρέμητα
Φύλλα κοιμῶνται.

“The country then appeared like a ruined temple, where singing is silent and the leaves of ivy sleep motionless.”

His nights are not always the same :—

Ὅταν τὰ οὐράνια
Ῥόδα μέ τὰ μαυρότατον
Πέπλον σκεπάζ' ἢ νύκτα.

III, 6.

Ἀπὸ τὸν οὐρανόν
Ὅσον τὰ μελανόπτερα
Σύννεφ' ἀρμενίζουν
Τό ψυχρόν της ἀργύριον
Ῥίπτει ἢ σελήνη.

“The moon from the heavens, where clouds with black wings are wandering, throws her cold silver.”

But to me the most artistic part of Kalvos seems to be the composition of his odes. The poet adopted the method

of ancient lyrics, according to which the strophes, at first appearing to be disconnected, are afterwards found to have an internal coherence. There are few of his odes in which one can from the beginning follow his meaning. Generally he begins at a distant point and goes on to another still farther off, then generalises upon the ideas and returns. But the empty space that seems to divide the verses like mountain peaks appears still more poetical. Read the *Φιλόπατρις* (Patriot), the *Μοῦσαι*, the *Ὀκεανὸς* (Ocean), and you will see not only ancient metopes, but also ancient triglyphs.

It is easy now to understand towards which model Kalvos turned his eyes. As Mme. Juliette Lamber remarked, "*Kalvos est un Pindare adouci, apaisé.*" His imitation of Pindar possesses a deeper significance. His odes are poems of triumph, because, as he says, "the achievements of the present day Greeks are equal to those of the ancients." But they also give him many occasions to set forth his ideas regarding bravery and ambition, and those still higher ones, of justice and universal harmony; but Kalvos especially praises *ἀρετὴν* (virtue), like his model Pindar. Virtue is the real religion of Kalvos. While Solomos has the Christian sweetness of Manzoni and loves the Church, Kalvos recognises only one God, who is the embodiment of reason and austere in the performance of his duty. He did not say to the Virgin's Son: "*Addio, nume semitico*" ("Good-bye, Semitic God") like Carducci—because, after all, this would not be right, but he rejected every mystery. Virtue is a law, and men following it will find this world a real paradise.

Ἀπό τὰ Ὀλύμπια δώματα
Δροσερόν καταβαίνει
Χαρᾶς, ἑλέου φύσημα
Καί στεγνώνει τὰ δάκρυα.

"From Olympian dwellings a fresh breeze of pity and joy comes down and dries tears."

But I am afraid that such a philosophy affected Kalvos's poetry. It gave it a modern tone not consistent with the

whole. In all his odes there is only "one kiss and another one." But immediately he adds

Ἀναίσχυντα φρονήματα
τῶν ἀγενῶν ἀνθρώπων.

("Impudent ideas of vile men.") Such a continence is very moral, but it is not archaic. Pindar avoids praising the immorality of the φορβύδων κορᾶν of Xenophon the Corinthian, but Kalvos despised all the enjoyments of life with which ancient poetry overflows. Carducci, upon entering "nelle verdi solitudine" with Lidia, invites also his divine companions "vino ed amore." Kalvos walks quite alone and offers only "ἄριστον ὕδωρ."

Like the great poets of antiquity, this sober-minded poet considered poetry as a high profession. But he is not solemn as a *vates*, but rather as a judge. His belief in virtue deprived him even of that respect for Fate and the reverence of the Unknown which gives such a depth to the ancient lyrics. He says :

ῥίπτω τῆς δεισιδαιμονίας
τό βαρύ βάκτρον.

("I reject the heavy staff of superstition"), but he forgets that even Pindar kept it with such impressiveness. Thus Kalvos stands before the modern Greek victors like a foreigner with a Geneva gown. His voice found no echo whatever in his islands or in the rest of Greece. On the contrary, all Ionian poetry, and indeed almost all that is fine in modern Greek verse, is derived from Solomos.

SIMOS MENARDOS.

QUARTET

WHO that has seen the Spring
With magic fingers deck the world anew
And, in the arching shade of some deep wood,
Fretted with sunlight, heard the bluebells ring
Their elfin chimes or clear-toned throistles woo
The slow reluctant morn, has gained such good
That nevermore may peevish care oppress

The memory of so much loveliness ;
But, drawing ceaseless bounty from that store
Of garnered wealth, rarer than virgin ore,
Shall count himself as rich as any king.

Who that has watched the rose
Unfurl her sanguine petals, one by one
Against the thicket's dim, embowered green,
Spilling their fragrance, till each breeze that blows
Offers her tribute to the conquering sun ;
Or who, when falls the dusky night, has seen
Lilies, like spell-bound maids that dream alone
Beneath a pale, enchanted moon, has known
Such vision as shall lift his earthbound eyes
Beyond the narrow confines of the skies,
To where that lost Hesperian Garden glows.

Who that has viewed the fire
Of Autumn kindling in a drowsy glade
Her sudden flames, so that the branches stand
Like torches set about the funeral pyre :
Of Summer, dead among her flowers—then stayed
To mark the leaves float down on either hand,
Poor broken butterflies, who nevermore
Will spread their painted wings as if to soar
Into the waiting blue, has learned how all
The joy of youth must pass as the leaves fall,
All strength, all comeliness and all desire.

Yet, when each bough is bent
Under the sterile harvest of the snow,
And pale ice-blossoms that no man may reap
Deck the wan meadows, where all life seems spent
Save where the starving birds hop to and fro ;
Then, when shall toll the solemn hour of sleep,
He need not grieve, for every lovely thing
His soul has known—the iridescent wing
Of the shy halcyon, lilacs washed with rain,
Or scent of thyme—shall come to him again
That lulled with beauty, he may rest content.

DOROTHY EWENS.

THE POETRY OF LEW SARETT

WHEN Lew Sarett gave up most of his university teaching to live in the Wisconsin woods, he was acting out the protest that colours many of his poems, the cry against the factitious civilisation of cities. Instead of viewing the world continuously through a haze of factory soot, he wanted to sit down beside a camp fire and look at things through "the slow smoke of burning maple logs." In his reaction to industrial shackles and hidebound theologies, Sarett has gone to the forest wilds and to the Red man for his emotional stimulus. He has given the American wilderness and the American Indian their most adequate interpretation.

An immigrant's son, born in a Chicago tenement, Sarett spent much of his boyhood in upper Michigan. "I always knocked about in the woods up there," he told me; "I hit it off alone into the hills to a wild trout stream, or, in winter, to set traps and to ski and snowshoe. I was never lonesome; somehow there was always plenty of company—plenty of tragic and comic stories all about—the turned-over moss, the pile of woodpecker feathers, the moose tracks in the muck, the comings and goings of all the wood folk. Literally I knew and loved about every kind of tree and flower and bird and beast."

But this paradise was lost for a time. When Sarett was thirteen, his family met with misfortune, and returned to Chicago for two years of bitter privation. The story of those years Harry Hansen has set down in *Midwest Portraits*—how the boy, thrown among pickpockets and prostitutes, had to earn bread for himself and his mother, how he sold newspapers, then carried bundles for a department store at \$2.50 a week, how he munched free crackers and cheese in "Hinkey Dink" Kenna's saloon.

"On hot summer nights," said Sarett, "the folks in these ramshackle tenements would be driven out of doors by the heat. They would go into the street, or on the roof, with no more clothing than the law requires. Lots of nights I'd walk down to the lake front and out on a pier in Lake Michigan, and I'd fling myself down and lie there all night long, never sleeping, just lying there in the cool lake breeze.

"I used to listen to the low, deep whistle of the lake steamers, and often I wondered whether they hit Marquette. And then I'd look up at the stars and locate my old friends, the Bear and the North star, and figure out the direction of our old home on Lake Superior. I may have been starving physically in those days, but I was a whole lot hungrier for the open country where I could breathe and live and run wild."

These conditions, which only intensified his passion for outdoor life, were bettered when the family returned to Michigan. And it was a proud day for the boy who once had sold papers for the Chicago *Daily News* when, twelve years later, he joined the paper's lecture staff and saw his picture in its columns.

In Michigan, Sarett went back to both school and wood lore. During the summer months he worked as a sportsmen's guide, as an athletic coach, and as a life-saver, gaining several medals for heroism. At that time he had no intention of ever writing or lecturing about the North.

"I was just a plain roustabout in some ways," he says. "My friends were, are yet, and ever will be lumberjacks, guides, Indians, and some of the wealthy tourist folk I piloted through the woods. I learned to respect and admire the two-fisted cussing men of the backwoods. They are genuine; no snobbery there.

"As to the life of the Indians, as I got closer to them and learned to understand their customs, superstitions, religion, language, I came more and more to see the beauty of it all. About this bronze figure, the symbol of our vanished West and of our beaten borderlands, hovers a wild poetic beauty as peculiarly American as the redolence of burning pine."

Sarett began working his way through the University of Michigan, but an appointment as assistant director of athletics at Beloit college took him to Wisconsin, where he debated, won oratory prizes, and in 1911 completed his undergraduate days. Then he studied law at Harvard, and later taught at the University of Illinois, continuing his study until a law degree was awarded him in 1916. In 1920 he went to Northwestern University, where he became a professor in the school of speech, spending several summers as a forest ranger in the United States National

Park service, and devoting others to the lecture platform. Six years later he cut his teaching to three months of the year, and his lecturing to six or eight weeks, and moved to a tiny lumbering town in the wilderness of which he writes.

Sarett's earliest book, *Many Many Moons*, is largely Indian; it embodies what Carl Sandburg calls "the loam and the lingo, the sand and the syllables of North America." Sarett's Chippewa lore was not gained in a Cambridge cloister or in a Manhattan hovel, but from the Red men themselves, who long ago christened him as Pay-shig-ah-deek, or Lone Caribou.

Often the poet dances in Indian celebrations; sometimes he goes fifty miles to attend an Indian dance, though he wouldn't cross the street for one of the white man's kind. He has used dance rhythms for many of his poems, and can dance every dance-poem in his books.

The Box of God marks a definite advance in Sarett's art. No one can read its title poem without feeling the beauty and force of Indian pantheism. Easily supplanting Longfellow's *Hiawatha* in Indian interpretation, this graphic account of how an old Indian was converted from his spiritual paganism to a white man's moribund ecclesiasticism brings out at once the nobility of the Indian's faith and the tawdriness of what sometimes passes for Christianity.

The original "box of God" was a little chapel at Grand Portage, Minnesota, on the north shore of Lake Superior, near the Canadian border. Sarett looked through the window of this church one day, then went in and sat down. Over the altar hung streamers of red, yellow, blue and green tissue paper, sprinkled with gilt, to catch the childish Indian mind. "It set the fire burning in me," he said. "Knowing the Indian's God as cosmically real and big—big with the colours, the power, the mystery of all the earth, of mountains and trees and altars—and beautiful as the rippling muscles of deer and the gleam of falling snow, how ironic was this trumped-up tinsel god that lived in a thirty-by-forty box of logs!"

With his third book, *Slow Smoke*, Sarett has reached the front rank of American poets. Here he is concerned less with the Indian, and more with wild nature. And it is increasingly hard to find flaws in his technique. His work is not sent off half-finished; almost invariably he keeps each poem a year before submitting it for publication. This latest collection is marked by a compassion for hurt creatures—for wounded or bewildered beasts, broken or frustrate human beings, derelicts, courtesans, social outcasts of the borderland.

Although *Slow Smoke* contains no single poem more powerful than *The Box of God*, the general tone of the book is higher than that of either preceding volume. There are cold, clear lyrics that no American anthology is complete without. *Four Little Foxes* is unquestionably a masterpiece; its painful tenderness increases with every reading. The mother fox is dead—"her feet within a trap, her blood upon the snow"—and the little ones are cold with hunger. The last stanza is irresistible:

Step softly, March, with your rampant hurricane;
Nuzzling one another, and whimpering with pain,
The new little foxes are shivering in the rain—
Step softly.

The warning *To a Wild Goose Over Decoys* has this same poetic artistry, with an even greater human connotation:

O lonely trumpeter, coasting down the sky,
Like a winter leaf blown from the bur-oak tree
By whipping winds, and flapping silverly
Against the sun—I know your lonely cry.

I know the worn wild heart that bends your flight
And circles you above this beckoning lake,
Eager of neck, to find the honking drake
Who speaks of reedy refuge for the night.

I know the sudden rapture that you fling
In answer to our friendly gander's call—
Haloo! Beware decoys!—or you will fall
With a silver bullet whistling in your wing.

Beat on your weary flight across the blue !
 Beware, O traveller, of our gabbling geese !
 Beware this weedy counterfeit of peace !—
 Oh, I was once a passing bird like you.

Sarett can stop writing now, assured of a safe place in American literature. But he's still fairly young—born in 1888—and still keenly alive to the appeal of wild life. If he can keep on evading Chautauquas and women's clubs and other decoys, we'll probably have more of his poems.

WAYNE GARD.

THE SHEPHERD'S FUNERAL

A LILE wind kindly blaws to-day ;
 They're takin' Dick fra' ower t'way
 To Dallow.

Dick 'ud be reet fain
 To rest theer, fur he's had a main
 O' trouble.

He'll be sixty-four
 Born an' bred on Dallow Moor.
 A shepherd ? Aye ! a good one, too,
 An' he'll be missed by not a few.
 Seems such a pity he should go
 Just now, but Spring cooms varra slow
 Into these parts.

Afore he died
 He said, "*Eh ! but I'd like to bide
 To listen a ring-ousel sing
 An' knaw 'at it wur really Spring,
 To see t'gowd plover an' lapwing
 Hover aboon Beck Meetings Wood
 An' just one snipe, by Gow, I should.
 But all my ewes are doin' well,
 Tho', if late snows coom, who can tell !
 Theer are two black lambs weakly still. . . .*"

THE POETRY REVIEW

To-day he's laid at Dallowgill,
 (Of all moors he luv'd Dallow best
 An' thowt it a sweet place to rest)
 He niver cared much fur low lands.
 Aye ! I believe thoo understands,
 Fur if thoo's bred alongside heath
 Thoo allus luv's it. . . .

About Death

Dost think around t' breet Courts above
 Their's some intake* ?

An' dost think, Luve,
 Theer is some moorland, beyant fields
 O' ruby walls, an' sapphire bields
 An' gowden flowers, an' emerald ways,
 Wheer a lile tummelling river plays !
 An' happen an owd hawthorn tree
 Fur folks like Dick an' you an' me !

DOROTHY UNA RATCLIFFE.

SEA HUNGER

I WHO have known the beauty of tall ships
 Flashing bright-sailed down the windy sea,
 May not be bound again by woman's lips,
 The home-hearth, and the hill-trail's witchery.
 I who have known the Port of Hundred Isles
 And felt the wind's cool hands in my tangled hair
 May not be lured again by woman's smiles,
 May not be held again by woman's prayer.

O ! the sea's soft voices call and I am going
 Where waves foam white and silver seagulls cry.
 The sea's insistent urge is past man's knowing
 But it works in my heart its age-old alchemy . . .
 I am leaving the hills behind me—the beaten track—
 I am going back to the sea—I am going back !

VERNE BRIGHT.

* Land taken in from the moorland.

DYNAMICS OF AMERICAN POETRY

XIII: JULIA DABNEY

MISS JULIA P. DABNEY, author of *The Musical Basis of Verse* (Longmans, Green and Co.), a valuable and scientific study of the principles of poetic composition, dealing with the relation between music and verse, the arts of sound, differentiated motion, melody and metric forms, and of *Children of the Sunrise* and *Songs of Destiny*, has recently given us two books—*Waters of Life* (The Torch Press, Cedar Rapids, Iowa) and *Echoes from India*, from the same publisher.

Waters of Life, a Christian drama of 120 A.D., is a vivid and colourful study, in an Egyptian setting, of phases of the spiritual struggle of the followers of the faith. The story is unfolded with conviction and ability. We will turn in the latter half to find the depths of Miss Dabney's belief in the Christian philosophy, to where Theodas, the priest and ardent instrument of the faith, asserts to Aglaie, the beautiful companion of Marcellus, a Roman general and Governor of Tripolis:

"Dear child, and will you also serve the Name?
Will you, too, be a handmaiden of God?—
For you are God's, whether you know or not.

* * *

O child, if I could only make you see
That this hot draught which so intoxicates
One mad, brief hour, shrivels up the soul,
And leaves an aftermath—a cosmic debt—
Of pain and woe beyond all computation!
For what a man shall sow that must he reap—
Constrained by the irrefragable law—
A desolating harvest.
A seething whirlpool of material things
Drowns out the stars—the higher light—the Source
Which should be guiding us.
The unstable fabric of this world's conditions—
Vertiginous, shifting with each wanton wind
Of circumstance—are like some nightmare trance,
An evocation of some sorcery
That hath no substance nor reality,
But melts before the omnipotent breath of Truth."

The drama moves logically on to the inevitable death of this striking figure, and Miss Dabney gives us much beauty of expression together

with a marked at-homeness in the scene. She writes in regard to this book: "The play ought to explain itself, I think. To the student of comparative religions, the illumined man, or initiate, is a familiar figure. If the presentment of Theodas suggests, in some measure, the great Master whom he followed I shall rest content."

In *Echoes from India* is much music, carrying the illusion of the East, its mystery and its fatalism. At a time when the exotic handling of many subjects has established a very possessing vogue, it is with surprise, and, perhaps satisfaction, we come upon Miss Dabney's cultured and controlled interpretations of India. They are truly echoes by way of a western ear and mind. India, the jewelled, the inscrutable, the removed, reaches us through many of her musical and beautiful lines as a very far thing transmitted and transmuted to meet our understanding.

The romantic tale of the Taj Mahal is given here by moonlight, opening with

Surely no human fingers ever wrought
 This miracle of beauty and delight—
 So fragile, so ethereal, so white—
 That through the silent night
 Uplifts its pinnacles to the regal moon,
 Who, o'er its fretted traceries
 And delicate filigrees—
 O'er portals, walls, and recessed bays,
 The full refulgence of her glamour lays !
 While, like a soft-repeated tune
 Down the wide waterways
 Where shimmering silver plays,
 The whole fair fabric in its mystic dress
 Mirrors itself—a dual loveliness !

* * *

They twain have rested there forever since—
 The deep-enamoured prince,
 And Mumtaz-i-Mahal, his perfect flower.
 The world rolls by ; life passes, hour by hour,
 But, side by side,
 In this immortal beauty they abide,
 Sleeping their sleep supreme—
 A dream within a dream !

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT.

OLD THEMES, NEW POETS.

Humbert Wolfe sings in *Iliad*.

"No love of yours,
but only what is sung
When love's over, endures."

THAT is what Edwin Arlington Robinson may have accomplished. At least, in *Tristram*, love does not stand out as freely as singing. The final effect is associated with the bard, not with the tale. He sings that old theme which was first a folk tradition in Norse, Welsh, German and Norman tongues. So within the story we find embellishments according to the country, reflections of its folk life. Later, some one poet in each country made it his own. The song took from the person of the singer. Nowhere has it done this more interestingly than in Mr. Robinson. As all previous singers were distinctly themselves, so is Mr. Robinson. Historical comparisons are entertaining. *He* gives to his writing the same earnestness of analysis and whimsical mysticism which the New England fathers sometimes found their natural approach to either God or everyday life. His highest sincerity and conception limit *Tristram*. It is as if Mr. Robinson lacked the experience of the love potion which he, in turn, denied his poem.

For, after the first poignant love passages, all further moments remain at just such a pitch, even to choosing inspiration from past wordiness. It has spent itself, but it must go on. An ageless love experience is adjusted and warmed over and explained. This may be as Mr. Robinson must present it to himself. He is in his usual articulation in a long poem—one main stream of idea and motive continuously interfered with by unimportant matter which drags the flow. Thought is for ever turning slightly back on itself until the reader ceases to give the original attention and is lulled by the rhythm of motion.

However, there is that about *Tristram* which makes me feel no literary critic should be discussing the book. In the olden days no polished reviewers set about to observe a master-work historically, poetically and dramatically. That they *now* exist may have been Mr. Robinson's good fortune. They heralded his book in such appreciative terms on a Sunday that by Tuesday noon not a copy could be bought at the booksellers' in New York City. Such mass heralding had insured the poem to several thousands of readers. The critics of the early *Tristram* singers were only lovers, or persons to whom the flares of love were possible. Were they now our sole critics, I think the book would fare hardly.

"No bravery, love,"

She said, "or surely none like mine, would hide,

Among things in my heart that are not hidden,
 A love larger than all time and all places,
 And stronger beyond knowledge than all numbers
 Around us that can only make us dead
 When they are done with us. Tristram, believe
 That if I die my love will not be dead,
 As I believe that yours will not be dead.
 If, in some after time your will may be
 To slay it for the sake of a new face,
 It will not die. Whatever you do to it,
 It will not die. We cannot make it die,
 We are not mighty enough to sentence love
 Stronger than death to die, though we may die.
 I do not think there is much love like ours
 Here in this life, or that too much of it
 Would make poor men and women who go alone
 Into their graves without it more content
 Than they are now. This may be true, or not.
 Perhaps I am not old enough to know—
 Not having lived always, nor having seen
 Much else than everything disorderly
 Deformed to order into a small court,
 Where love was most a lie. Might not the world,
 If we could sift it into a small picture,
 Be more like that than it would be like—this?
 No, there is not much like this in the world—
 And there may not be this!”

The best passages occur when the lovers are separated. The least conscious art is in the behaviour of King Mark—the finest development of the book.

If one must have love poetry, let it be from the pen of Edna St. Vincent Millay. Read *The King's Henchman*. In a fog-bound wood, obscured by the confused agitations of freshly disturbed emotion, Æthelwold and Ælfrida utter the few fragments of speech that love intermittently releases. There is no trace of artistic reserve; there is, rather the natural love, intervals that leave so much to the silences.

*(He turns and leans his forehead against the trunk of the
 tree by which he is standing. Presently he turns
 and looks at her.)*

Thou—knowest thou aught of love, and how it taketh a man?
 Thinkest thou that I am in love with thee?

Ælfrida (*faintly*) :

I would it were so. . . .

Æthelwold (*staring at her*) :

I must be near thee or die.

(*He comes blindly toward her and takes her in his arms.*)

Ælfrida :

I am lost. . . . I am swept out to sea. . . .

(*She lifts her face to his. He kisses her. They stand for a moment embraced.*)

How thou shakest !

Art thou a-cold, my dear ?

Æthelwold :

Yea . . . nay. . . . I know not. . . .

I am a tree in a storm. . . .

(*He turns from her, clinging to her hand, and sinks down upon the fallen tree.*)

How silken-soft thou art—

Wonderful . . . wonderful. . . .

How camest thou thus unwounded through the bramble wood ?—

The bramble world ?

Look at me : I am woven all of sedges,

Like a rush mat.

Ælfrida :

Not so.

(*She spreads her cloak hastily over the log and seats herself upon it beside him. She touches his cheek.*)

Thy cheek is brown and smooth,

Like the rind of a nut

New bursten from his burr.

I have not seen thy like.

Æthelwold :

The like of thee

Sings not nor blossoms.

The wind that soughs in the sedges at the edge of the pool

Has seen the swan go by,

So still and slow

And cool.

The bee that ferries his hoard from blossom to hive

Ere summer day be done,

Knows the sweet reek of the clover

Bruised by the wheels of the sun.

Wan ghost between
 Two lights, the shadowy flutter-mouse,
 Half-seeing and half-seen,
 Swoops in the glimmering even ;
 The early star he knows,
 And her cool wave upon his ribby fin.

Sweet, sweet,
 Without, within,
 Is the rose,
 Whither the white moth steereth his sail.

Yet, ah, not wind nor bee
 Nor any earthly wight
 Have seen what I see,
 Nor hath any man heard from his father's father in an old tale
 The like of thee.

Ælfrida :

Ah, me, how frosty sweet the moonlight !

Æthelwold :

Icy sweet on thy mouth of ripened haws the moonlight. . . .
 Beloved . . . beloved. . . .

Miss Millay and Mr. Robinson are honoured as two of our greatest American poets. This winter they have both dealt with old-world material which demands strained dramatic fruition from a central love motif. One, a man, and one, a woman, have met these requirements differinglly. Miss Millay seems to have fallen wide of her New England nature and to have freed her genius.

Mr. Robinson is more Robinson than ever. Having increased his particular individuality, may he now yield to a grateful public further terse, polished, compact New England studies, wherein he is as yet excelled by none.

HELEN HARTNESS FLANDERS.

* * *

The American Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW offers \$100 for the best poem, not exceeding 100 lines, on *The Leader*, in memory of Dr. Percy Stickney Grant—see p. 203. MSS. must reach Mrs. Bartlett, 299 Park Avenue, New York, by November 1st, 1927. The poems in this contest may deal with any leader of any time and any clime, or with the qualities of leadership.

MR. T. EARLE WELBY'S STUDY OF SWINBURNE.

THIS is a book by one who knows much about Swinburne, and can give his reasons for loving the greater part of what he knows. On its merits, even when we differ from Mr. Welby's views, we can strongly recommend its perusal to all lovers of our great romantic poet.

Sir Edmund Gosse's personal portrait is too complete for any very significant addition, but Mr. Welby constantly makes fresh and suggestive links between the personality and the poems.

We are glad to reject Mr. Welby's theory that the general verdict on Swinburne is one of half contemptuous dismissal. By his publication of *Atalanta* and *Poems and Ballads*, in 1865, he was said to have taken the literary circles by storm, and inspired youthful admirers to go about chanting his verses. This we hold to be true of every generation since, and to be predictable of all to come. We have heard this chanting, moreover, not only amongst the adolescent, but from men of mature years, already famous in the professions or politics. The British race is "incurably" romantic, and the speed and eloquence of Swinburne will ensure his permanent authority in the world of the lovers of poetry.

LIBERTY.

Mr. Welby seeks a co-ordinating link for all the poet's works in the ideal of political or sensual liberty. His Victorian critics usually preferred the terms "revolution" and "licence." They laid too little stress on *Songs before Sunrise*, which celebrates that austere and self-sacrificing devotion which real liberty demands. But even Swinburne, himself, regarded the attitude of that volume as one of a sort of recantation, a sloughing off of his old skin; and they may be excused for looking on his earlier works as more characteristic. We cannot regard *Poems and Ballads* (No. 1), *Atalanta*, itself, or *Tristram and Yseult* as primarily poems of liberty. The fierce eroticism of *Dolores* or *Laus Veneris* explores dark avenues in human nature, and, though partly mere gestures against what Swinburne thought prudery, the term liberty seems inapplicable. We can only accept this generalisation with Mr. Welby's own reservation—that one cannot explain a poet by a formula. The poet's soul is kaleidoscopic—sometimes bewilderingly so, as Keats found to his own dismay. Swinburne loved Italy as his second mother country, and sang his heart out for its struggling nationhood. Had his ardour been for a more abstract conception of liberty, he would scarcely have shown his later antipathy to Home Rule for Ireland.

"LAUS VENERIS."

Under this title, Mr. Welby deals with Swinburne's poems which sprang from his own disappointment in love—his loss of the "*wine and leaven of lovely life*," and those very different lyrics which called up the wrath of Victorian moralists as "puerile prurience," and worse. It was evidently believed—and Mr. Welby would seem to agree—that there was attraction and even seduction for the young in these latter works. This is a difficult and not very savoury side of the subject. They seem to us to show a spirit of ecstatic self-surrender to the urgings of sex, more terrible than alluring, and far removed from the prompting of ordinary licentiousness. In the most important, emphasis seems to be laid on the cruelty, satiety, and despair which attend the orgies of sense—the bloody sand of the arena.

"Ringed round with fair faces
And splendid with swords."

The exploration of these dark places is of more interest from the psychological side. Mr. Welby indicates, as we think, the true line of this approach when he quotes Swinburne's own explanation of the origin of the poem called *Laus Veneris*—he said it was the Goddess of Love "grown diabolic in an age which would not accept her as divine." In so far as they are morbid, they would seem to be the result of repression. But there are things said in them which required saying, though whether Swinburne, with his incurable impishness, was the man to say them is another matter.

"SONGS BEFORE SUNRISE."

Mr. Welby's agreement with his poet in the belief that this was his greatest publication, led us to hope great things from this part of his work. In the main, that hope was justified by the close and discriminating judgments passed on the various poems. But Mr. Welby seeks to defend Swinburne from the charge of extravagance in the chanting of his hymns round the altar of Italy, by suggesting that he was, in reality, vindicating the eternal principle of abstract freedom which "neither Mazzini nor any other individual, but only the age-long efforts of all men, could fully realize." These canticles, according to Mr. Welby, only appear to be a commentary on the events of the time. The poet is celebrating some transcendent religion of liberty—hence the exuberance which puzzled even Sir Edmund Gosse.

Frankly, we cannot accept this. There are, of course, in all

poetry of this merit, the two elements, the occasional and the eternal. In praising his lady, a great poet, no doubt, says things which are for all lovers for all time. But the idea that he set out to do the latter, leaving the rest as merely incidental, does not please us—nor would it please the lady.

We doubt if Mr. Welby gives sufficient weight to the immense enthusiasm for Italian freedom which swept over England in those days, which made Londoners throng Garibaldi's carriage on his visit to us, and led poor working girls to give their last shillings to Italian refugees. Officers and men of the British Navy, coasting near Italy with the secret approval of the Liberal Ministry, used to take their leave—or go without it—in localities where they could fire a shot or two for the great cause. Mr. Gladstone described the tyranny against which Garibaldi fought, as “the negation of God erected into a system of government.” Swinburne offered his pen as he would have given his life for the freedom of the land he loved so passionately. Abstract ideas are not usually so powerful a motive force. One thinks of Dr. Dillon's reply to Lord Hugh Cecil in a Parliamentary debate. He was asked “What is nationality.”—“Nationality is that for which a man would die. Not even the noble lord would die for the meridian of Greenwich.”

The truth is, we suspect, that in this matter, the critic is out of touch with the poet. Mr. Welby does not admire democracy, which he describes as even then having its future behind it, and becoming grosser and more dangerous with every development. He may be right or wrong, as may Swinburne in wanting to smash kings and popes—anyone who seemed to him to represent tyranny. But their attitudes are irreconcilable. If Mr. Welby had met his poet wandering, as he used to wander, round my garden, where there is a deep lake, and had raised this point, one or other must have gone to feed the fishes.

If any excuse is needed for the occasional extravagance of these poems, it should be sought by the perusal of *In San Lorenzo*. Passion, like beauty, “raised to such a height is already consecrate.”

“ATALANTA.”

Mr. Welby's appreciation of this, Swinburne's most famous work, is generous as well as just. He gives it due praise for its “brilliance, speed, and lovely exuberance not yet become extravagance.”

We find it rather pedantic to discover a serious stumbling-block in the “Conception of Fate, which at times seems identifiable with the will of the gods, and at others to master even them.” If this be a fault, then the main theme is in discord. But is this un-Greek?

Is it at variance with the Hebrew conception? Surely *Moir* lay behind and above the powers of the Greek Theocracy. In the old revision of the Atonement is there no suggestion of a power which even the Deity must satisfy?

Atalanta seems to us to have been Swinburne's defiant protest against the inexorable cruelty of this blind power. The gods, in part mere executants, share his wrath, but the deadliest invective is launched at the "Supreme Evil"—God—for which we read *Moir*.

What excited this particular train of thought is guesswork; but we find it suggestive that the drama was begun soon after the publication of the *Origin of Species*. Many must have felt, as Mr. Shaw feels to-day, that Darwin's book placed humanity at the mercy of a capricious Cosmic process. To many it seemed to place blind chance on the throne of the All-Father.

Swinburne's values, in spite of his rather vague creed of pantheism, were fixed. He believed in the divinity of the righteous spirit in man, and considered Christ its highest example. In his defiant challenge to the Powers which

"Smite the righteous and the violent mouth

And praise the holier as the lying lip,"

he may well have felt he was denouncing Baal in the name of the God of Mercy and Justice.

THE TRAGEDIES.

Mr. Welby, in effect, lodges an appeal against the common judgment that these works are of no great value. He gives some fine passages to implement his propositions. We wish he had given many more. The fact is, they are overlaid with the worst obstacles to appreciation—the lack of the shock and sting of life, or immense verbiage, sometimes fine as rhetoric, but always immense. If Mr. Welby could act in the spirit of Jowett's "cut" of 4,000 lines from "Boswell," and give the Swinburne lovers the true and lively of these colossal productions, we think that Swinburne's ghost might repeat his thanks, given on bended knees, to the "Master." Mr. Welby gives us some hope that he will undertake some task of the sort. His own scholarship and devotion to the poet make him a very proper choice for the work. At present we fear his appeal must be dismissed.

ARTISTRY.

Of Swinburne's peculiar genius as a poet, Mr. Welby has much to say, and to the point. Swinburne's concern, he tells us, is "less

to say incidental things memorably than to avoid saying them too memorably, and his art is in keeping up the movement and the shimmer of his imagery till the general effect has been secured. . . . "The words belong rather to the stanza than to the couplet." That, with its many perils, was Swinburne's way.

We do not feel content with his further opinion that "Not musical value, but metrical value, is what concerns Swinburne as a rule." He has, however, the powerful support of Mr. Drinkwater, in the latter's refusal to admit Swinburne's mastery of rhythm, while granting that of metre.

It is perhaps only a difference in the meaning attached to the words, "music," "rhythm," and "metre." To us "rhythm" is the general flow of the poem; metre the arrangement, periods or accents of the words constituting the line. "Music," and "rhythm" would have, in our view, a far higher emotional potential than metre. We wish to make our belief clear that no man like Ruskin, steeped in the great poetry of his own and other ages, could have been "swept away like a pebble" by mere metrical virtuosity.

Swinburne was a fine gentleman as well as a great poet, a loyal friend and a lover of children and the old. Apart from and above his golden music, was his passionate zeal for causes which we know were noble. Indeed, the faith he held so securely was, in its essence, the divinity of the soul of man and its possibility, indeed necessity, of progress. He saw in the claims of the absolute monarchies of Europe and the Papacy the furies which beset the upward path of humanity. Even these he could not wholly hate. One can believe that, among the Greek choruses which he repeated to himself as he lay dying, was the one he had himself so finely rendered—

"Go honoured hence, go home,
Night's childless children; here your hour is done;
Pass with the stars and leave us with the sun."

A. W. WILLS.

POETRY OF TO-DAY:

Mr. Trevor Blakemore, removed from London coteries, audits the books of love and Nature in Guernsey, and sets both debit and credit balances down in thoughtful, melodious verse with the skill, accuracy and terseness of one experienced in the accountancy of poetics. Even when he indulges in free verse, he is rhythmical—he does not degenerate into jagged, staccato lines or poetic prose—(*Sunrise*, St. Catherine Press). And with his precision of word and phrase and image, he can introduce atmosphere too, as in *Haunted* :—

On one hidden beach of the island,
 The cliff throws a shadow all day,
 Above are the flowers and the sunshine,
 But there it is always grey.

Instead of the gulls, black wry-necks
 Scream from their rocky beds,
 And the tide lifts the weed with its flowing
 Like the hair upon drowned men's heads.

And often I've turned and listened,
 Though the bay stretched wide and bare,
 For hidden away in the shadows,
 I know there is some one there.

There is the same robust spirit in Mr. Austin Clarke's poetical comedy *The Son of Learning* (Allen and Unwin, 5s.) that was noticeable in his *Cattledrive of Connaught*, but there is less music. What his language has lost in music, however, it has gained in dramatic interest and suitability to the rollicking theme of the mediæval Irish romance. The author of the play succeeds in "putting it over" more effectually than does Mr. Evarts S. Scudder with his *The Crusaders* (Duckworth), another poetic drama. *The Crusaders* is well planned, and well written, yet never quite reaches the intensity of emotion that the largeness of the theme demands. The scene is the siege of Antioch, and the quoted lines are taken from the mouth of one of the French captains :—

What dishonour

To advance the flag of Christ ?
 Who will e'er know the means ? If France should hear
 The flower of her manhood withered up
 Without the walls in futile mad endeavour
 Will she applaud, think you ? Or if she hear
 Antioch fallen o'er the citadel
 Floats the bright crimson of the sacred Cross :
 'Neath the mailed heel of knights the infidel
 Lies rotting in the dust, think you, she'll ask
 Or make enquiry nice and delicate
 Into the methods ?

The Altars of Pain, by A. E. S. Riddle (Selwyn and Blount, 3s. 6d.), is a "Vision of Time and Eternity" written in the form of poetic dialogue, and treats of spiritual and not material experience. Mr.

Riddle has had the courage that most of us lack to put his thoughts of the hereafter into concrete form. Also, he has penned them with convincing sincerity and considerable artistry. His book is an interesting and an unusual one.

Among the volumes of short poems that have been submitted for review this month is one containing the *Selected and Later Poems* of Winifred Lucas (John Lane, 6s.), a delightful book, with almost as much of meaning in each word of this poet as there is in the lines of others, yet so carefully are the poems constructed that the condensation never troubles one's enjoyment. The Bodleian has chosen *Nocturnes* for quotation, and I cannot do better than follow its example :

I.

My heart is faint with such a trust.

Had you no toy for me to keep,

No charge less intimate than just

This sleep ?

II.

Soft lids now veiling visibly

From us the twin and tender homes

Whose tenant is the wondering sky,

Blue with the bluest day that comes, . . .

At your mysterious to and fro

All day the heavens have glanced and gone,

You have her living heart to show . . .

You have her eyes to close upon.

The Eldest Sister, by Gwen Clear (Longmans, 5s.), is individual in style, particularly in the title poem, from which this verse is quoted :—

And now the unquiet eyes are calmed, and stilled

The strong thin fingers, clasped across her knee.

Her loosened hair is smoothed again ; alone

She sits in the warm firelight peacefully,

Till the old unquiet returns, with the visioned faces

Of children whose lips and eyes are quick with the traces

Of grief and desire in a face that she loved, that passed

In gentleness through the slowly changing seasons,

And still shall travel with her at the last.

Under the Star, in the same book, is a beautiful little poem.

Mr. Lindley Williams Hubbell in *Dark Pavilion* (Yale Univ. Press, 6s. 6d.), though a less subtle writer than Miss Winifred Lucas, yet shows a habit of clear close thought and an epigrammatic quality of verse. *Dare to be Lost* is typically thoughtful and courageous :

Dare to be lost,
However bleak the coast ;
Let your soul shelter no desire
Save to be pierced with steel and burned in fire.

Fear but this thing : that you should turn to rest
Safe but unblest ;
Rather than suffer this,
Choose the abyss.
There is no soul that in this torment dies
Would have it otherwise.

Out of *Difficult Love*, by L. A. G. Strong (Blackwell, 5s.), I have chosen some verses from the poem, *Leap Out, My Love*, to illustrate the rich quality of the writer's thoughts and words :

Leap out, my love, to ride her hair
And bid her breath enkindle
A roving star to carry us
Over the sleepy spindle

That threads the deep core of the world,
Till we can see below
The creeping sails of life unfurled
On destined ebb and flow.

The hawk, the osprey, and the cloud
Fall far away,
As I unfasten from your neck
The coils of night and day.

These are the pinnacles of sleep
Where sick men climb from pain,
And there a flock of months, like sheep,
Is grazing on the plain.

Of time to come, confounding sense
Of grooved and lettered earth,

Till West may take the hand of East,
And Doom keep house for Birth.

My lips are hidden in your breast ;
The words I whisper now
Outrun the gallop of a song,
The tether of a vow....

By comparison with these books, the remaining two volumes, *The Pillars of Hercules*, by Clinton Headlam (Cambridge Univ. Press, 3s.), and *Twenty Poems*, by Piers Compton (Mathews and Marrot), appear a little thin. So often either the inspiration or the technique of the writer is insufficient to flood the whole poem. Good lines are bolstered up with padding, and the memorableness of them is dissipated in this way.

EVELYN D. BANGAY.

SCOTS POETRY AND NEW POETS.

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

SIR,—I have read with interest Lady Margaret Sackville's article on "The Poetry of Lewis Spence," in the July-August issue of *THE POETRY REVIEW*. And though I am unable to enter into her raptures over this poet, and far from placing him in the same category with the immortal Drummond of Hawthornden, it is still gratifying to see at last a little notice taken of our—rather neglected—modern Scottish Poetry. We in Scotland, who really care for poetry, are very tired of this glib and fashionable cry that "Scottish Poetry began and ended with Burns." We should like to ask what of Sir Walter Scott, what of Robert Louis Stevenson, what of Mrs. Violet Jacob, and many others, to say nothing of the wealth of national songs? It is safe to say there is no land with a more rich and varied minstrelsy; and it is as ignorant to think that Burns wrote all these songs as that David wrote all the Psalms. And is it, I wonder, because Lord Byron never wrote a line in the Doric that it is persistently forgotten that he was a Scot, bearing the honoured name of Gordon, one of the most powerful of the clans. The fact seems to be that, whenever a Scot forsakes the Doric and writes in pure English, his nationality is forgotten.

I think there are very few of those who read and appreciate Burns who would agree with Lady Margaret Sackville that his Muse was "very largely Anglicised." But, of course, we in Scotland know that appreciation of this true and wonderful genius is a rare gift. The "Anglicised" portion of our Poet's work is quite negligible, and

now more or less forgotten. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, in the *Oxford Book of Verse*, does not give us one single instance of the "Anglicised" Burns, while there are fourteen examples of the Doric.

But even to the present day Scotland is not forsaken of the poetic fire, and in the work of Miss Marian Angus we have that poetic fire in a very marked degree. It is rather surprising that her work does not meet with all the recognition that it deserves, and I think I am not wrong in saying that THE POETRY REVIEW has not yet noticed it. This neglect is not on account of the "braid Scots" in which she frequently writes, which I allow is "difficult" for English readers (though I know English readers who answer at once to the beauty of her verse, even though they do not understand every word; a test in itself of pure poetry). But Miss Angus, though perfectly at home in the Doric, is yet capable of writing in the purest English. It is because I believe that here we have Scottish Poetry of to-day at its very highest, that I would ask you of your courtesy, sir, to grant me a little space that I may allow Miss Angus to speak for herself in the following poems, which are taken from *The Tinker's Road*, a volume of short poems published by Gowans and Gray, of Glasgow, some two years ago :

THE GHOST.

The wind that brings the twilight in
Is musky-scented faint and thin.
When light as dew on tender herb
A footstep falls across the kerb.

Into the street the children pack
With, "Here's the pedlar-man come back !
The pedlar with the red balloons,
And flutes that play the dancing tunes."

The wind that brings the twilight home
Is frailer than the drifted foam,
When light as vapour on a glass
The footstep falls upon the grass.

"O Mary, loose your cloudy wrap !
The gate is shut, no timorous tap
Comes on the empty window pane,
To wake your life to joy again.

“ The old one broods beside the fire.
No grief has she, and no desire.
With puckered lips and crooked smile
She mutters to herself the while.

“ A year, or two—or maybe three—
And I the pedlar-man shall be,
And I the baby soft and white
That Mary cries for in the night,
And I the wind so faint and thin,
The wind that blows the twilight in.”

ANNIE HONEY.

When we gave him no “ Good-e’en ”
At the cross or on the green,
Nor welcomed him with laughter for the love
Of the songs he once was making
At the brewing or the baking,
Songs we were a-wearied of,

It was Annie Honey who
Said he went at dawning through
The valley where the white mist chills.
Softly, so that none should waken,
He the secret road has taken,
For the country of the Kind Folk
That lies beyond the hills.

Annie Honey, heart of gold,
In the windy town a-cold,
Under the drifting April moons,
Could not stay her eyes from weeping,
Sorrowed waking, sorrowed sleeping,
For his wild lamenting tunes.

Welladay, and welladay !
Came October mournfully,
Brindled moths a-spinning
In a twilight green ;
Every plane-tree mist-enfolden
Black as velvet, amber-golden,
Was a leopard lithe and lean.

All a-tremble did she hear,
 Now so far, now so near,
 With a music rarer than the brown bird trills,
 "Annie Honey, Annie Honey—Annie H—o—n—e—y.
 And she followed where it led her,
 To the land beyond the hills.

TREASURE-TROVE.

Do you mind rinnin' barefit
 In the saft summer mist,
 Liltin' and linkin' on the steep hill-heids ?
 In below your tartan shawl, your hand would aye twist
 Your bonny green beads.

Do you mind traivellin', traivellin'
 Ower and ower the braes
 Reistlin' the heather, and keekin' naith the weeds,
 For yer tint green beads ?

Whist ! Dinna rouse him,
 The auld sleepin' man—
 Steek the door ; the mune-licht's on the lone hill-heids—
 Wee elvin craturs is delvin' in the sand,
 They canna miss the glimmer
 O' yer auld green beads.

Here they come, the wee folk,
 Speedin' fast and fleet—
 There's a queer low lauchin' on the grey hill-heids—
 An' the bricht drops glancin', following at their feet—
 It's green, green beads—
 The last ye'll ever see o' yer bonny green beads.

Yours truly,
 FLORENCE CORTIS-STANFORD
 (MRS. ROBERTSON CAMERON.)

Aberdeen.

* * *

The autumn meetings of the Barnet Centre of The Poetry Society will begin on October 15 with a lecture by Miss Dorothy M. Stuart ("D.S.M." of *Punch*) on Colour in Poetry, at Church House, 8.15 p.m., the President, Sir Owen Seaman, in the chair.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S VERSE

A BRIEF SURVEY OF SOME ORIGINAL POEMS.

IN the verse of young people one does not look so much for excellence in technique or the mastery of style as for spontaneity of thought and an indication of the knowledge of what is worth while saying. One does not expect their verse to be very sustained either in feeling or expression—I would go even further and say, one does not desire it—not yet—but one very gladly recognises and rewards real flashes of poetic impulse and an indicative notion of restraint. A good deal of padding is necessary in early attempts at versification, and very often there is a naïve quality about these filling-in lines that fades away all too soon under the influence of a growing self-consciousness.

The specimens of children's verse that have come to hand during the last few months—not nearly as many as one could wish for, unfortunately—show a great variety of feeling. I give the place of honour to *The Call*, by Kitty Morris, which is delicately descriptive of an untenanted cottage and the cause of its desertion. *After Hunting* is another good poem by the same writer.

Moods, by Helen E. Flanders (13), is the second-best poem. It is worthy of special remark on account of the elaboration of its theme and the careful summing up of ideas at the end. "I am an apple," says the author, in the first verse, then "a poppy," "a wine-red rose," "a violet," "a river," in each succeeding verse. The last line of all is excellent in its capitulation :—

"What, then (with river, poppies, all), am I ?"

Prelude to a Tragedy, by the same writer, creates a very real atmosphere of anticipation and ends with :

The bird's song sounds strange upon the bough,
The bees have stopped their pleasant busy hum.
There is no joy about the country now,
For all the people know the end is come.

A very poignant note is struck by Mary Colquhoun (12½) in *Drowned*. I quote two of its seven short verses :

What charmed his feet
Down to the river ?
Oh how I shiver,
My love, my sweet.

On the green bank—
Balanced a minute,

Then softly in it
My darling sank ;

and much tenderness is manifest in *My Mother's Hands*, by M. W. P., that begins :

I sing of my Mother's hands,
The lovely, lovely things,
So wee and white and soft,
Just like angels' wings.

In lighter vein is the story of the *Sparrow and the Fairy*, by Clodagh Dulanty (12). It is a most attractive little poem. I like the sparrow's short-lived, successful moment the best :

Then the sparrow came up and said, " My dear Miss,
Let me take you with me to the South,"
And she wept with joy and gave him a kiss
Right on his dear peaky mouth ;

and nobody could resist the deliciousness of *My Baby Dear*, also by Clodagh Dulanty :

Small bald head,	Little gurgles,
Blue eyes so clear,	P'raps a tear,
Fat pink hand,	Soft fat laughter,
My baby dear.	My baby dear.
Wee snub nose,	Wee white dress,
Pearly ear,	Cap so queer,
Rosy lips,	Woolly boots,
My baby dear.	My baby dear.

You're still near God,
Yes ! very near,
But don't go yet
My baby dear.

Alma Bennett (14) shows decided promise in *Kelvedon* and in *Waiting*, particularly the latter, and in the lines :

Silent and hearkening . . .
For some din far-off footstep in the snow
That lies across the pathway ;
For some gay voices mingling with the wind
And a soft knock against the door.

Two other writers, Caroline Porter (13), and Barbara J. Gordon (15), are meritoriously ambitious, if not quite so successful, with their poems. The first named sends a sonnet, *Thought*, that is a correct one except for line 7, which is too long. There is thought behind it as well as in its title, but the task of making the sonnet really forceful has been rather too much for the writer. Barbara Gordon also shows thought beyond what one expects of her years. *A Wish* has the idea and rudiments of a very excellent poem in it. If, however, a sonnet form is chosen the proper metre should be held to.

An excellent group of poems has arrived from King Edward VI Grammar School at Louth. The poems show individuality of thought and style, from the spring sorrow shown in Ella Humphrey's (17) *Spring*, which begins :—

Spring, why will you come
To make me glad,
When I mourn my love
And would be sad ?

to the whimsical *An Ode to a Rain Puddle* by Rita Beckett (13). This is not really an ode at all, but it shows a delightful fancy, ending, after the horse and cart have gone by, with :

My little mirror leaped so high . . .
Then fell in pieces on the ground.

Elizabeth Binnington (13) can describe *Paradise Court* with clearness and pity :

The street was dim and sordid, and the houses dark and high,
With storey upon storey reaching up towards the sky.

Mildred Leake can also write newly of *Spring*, and Zillah Parkinson and Winifred Carton can put a sense of heart-ache into their *Ballade* and *The Crusade*, respectively.

The *Catching a Goblin* of Kathleen Dobson (13) is truly whimsical, and Frances Harbord (14) has allowed a sense of atmosphere to permeate her poem on *Gloucester Cathedral Close*. *Sir Francis Drake*, by N. Pritchard (16), is a good attempt at a narrative poem, though the lines keep rather on a dead level. I have mentioned these promising young writers in the order of merit. E. D. B.

THE CALL.

I saw a house among the fern,
Thatched with rushes from the burn ;
Broken windows, open door,

THE POETRY REVIEW

Ashes on the cobbled floor,
 Long burnt out and cold and grey.
 I saw a buzzard wing his way
 Towards the hills.

A silence fell.
 The rusty chain above the well
 Blew in the wind . . . the sunbeams came
 In through the unglazed window pane,
 Lit up the room, shone on the wall
 On which I saw some writing small,
 And bent to read the pencilled scrawl :
 "Llew Evans, 1899,"
 And underneath, more neat and fine :
 "Myfanwy . . . Once we two lived here,
 Time ago some seven year,
 But it is no place for we,
 Where the Little People be ;
 For they took our youngest one
 Whom we lost two years ago."

I saw a vision of a child,
 Dark-eyed, brown-eyed, elf locks black,
 On the hill behind the shack,
 Timid as a hunted thing,
 Full of wild imagining ;
 Barefoot in the sodden heather,
 Little hands clasped tight together ;
 Child that no one understood,
 Even those of Celtic blood,
 Superstitious whence she sprang :
 Heard the lilting song she sang
 In her own tongue, wild and sweet ;
 Heard a voice call through the sleet :
 "Gwyneth bach, come home to me !"

Saw her listen, turn . . . and flee
 From the human voice that cried,
 At whose call her dream-folk died ;
 Turned and fled . . . to come no more
 To the folk she loved before . . .
 Fled from that wide open door
 To the People of the Moor.

KITTY MORRIS.

MOODS.

I am an apple, gold and ruddy red
And fragrant set within my leafy bed ;
Sun-touched and rain-washed, soft, transparent ripe.
Below, the shepherds dance, the treble pipe
Sings its caprices through the tubes of reed.
The hirelings frolic on the fragrant mead ;
They skip and trip across the velvet grass.
My fruit delights the maidens as they pass.

I am a poppy, full-blown, bright with laughter.
My sleep-beguiling seeds go drifting after,
To find, at heavy noon, in dull siesta
A senorita garbed for gay fiesta.
I'll close her eyes in happy, lazy langour
Till, dozing, lost from pain and care and hunger,
She dreams that, through the orange grove and clover,
He comes . . . around her flower-face, to hover.

I am a wine-red rose of love and longing,
And by my tree the world comes ever thronging
To pick my buds for their young loves to wear
Upon the girdle, breast or in the hair.
So soft a lady steals upon my musing,
Her bounden hair with trembling hand unloosing . . .
He will come soon, for Dian's moon is shining,
To watch the stars, beside the fountain pining.

I am a violet beside the spring
Of April's icy waters babbling
A-down the bare-treed, chilly homeless vale,
Still carpeted with autumn leaves so frail,
They crackle at the softest, lightest tread.
The buds upon the maple trees swell red.
The virgin nymph calls out her favourite fawn
And they will romp until the sun is gone.

I am a river, flowing to the sea,
Sometimes I hurry loud along the lea,
And then, from off the precipice go falling
Upon the black rock-floor, in tumult sprawling.
But more, in peaceful quiet tenor, glide

And clear the gravel's soft and slimy side ;
 For hours, to slip along in dreamless sleep
 Until my dark depths join the ocean's deep.

Yet why should any young mind deal in fancies,
 For life is all in hours of change and chances ?
 And yet a woman must needs be capricious
 That she may make her moments taste delicious,
 Nor on the frequent path could ever stray,
 But remakes each fleet thought from day to day
 Suit many moods, to last until she die ;
 What then (with river, poppies, all) am I ?

HELEN ELIZABETH FLANDERS.

THE PREMIUM EDITOR'S REPORT.

Space being claimed for the announcement of awards in other competitions, we are limited this month in this regular section of THE POETRY REVIEW to the bare adjudication of the usual Premiums without general comment. We are inclined on this occasion to favour the long poem, excellent examples of which have been submitted by J. W. Nance (Bromborough), a classical threnody on the passing of summer ; A. E. Macky (Chelsea), a carefully developed character study ; and Julia Boynton Green (California), a recondite, scientific poem. As the latter has recently carried off the Premium and we cannot place her poem ahead of the other two, we must mention her as *hors concours* and divide the Premium between the other two contributors, placing in the honours list of Highly Commended A. D. L. Wilson (Bedford), a tribute to Julian Grenfell that fits that gallant soldier ; G. W. Eustace (Arundel), who sends a spirited ballad in honour of William Penn ; Clyde Robertson, (Reading, Pa.), for a severe sonnet on New York (Mrs. Robertson incidentally tells us "how very vital I think D. F. Radford's *Common Story* is. It is so true, touching and inevitable") ; Edith Samms (Bedford), for three sonnet studies of types ; K. O'N. Bailey (Harpenden), whose work is always marked by individual culture ; M. Rees (Pembroke Dock), for *Yellow Wagtails*—full of pleasant imagery ; M. Ormiston (S.W.), who in *An Aeroplane at Stonehenge* again shows that she can associate material affairs and happenings with serious poetry ; and Barbara Smythe (Perth) for poems that flame with colour. The following also deserve commendation for work of fine quality :—Vera McCormick (Singapore), N. Allport (Polesworth), M. L. Brooke (Brackley), T. N.

Harrop (Wolverhampton), J. Purdie (Paisley), Mrs. Osborne (Wakefield), C. G. Taylor (Camberley), E. E. Taylor (Virginia), Miss Pollard (Bath), Francis Bacon (Nuneaton), E. Alden (Haddenham), T. B. Crawford (Paisley), Bertha M. Skeat (Sedbergh), Langton Fielding (Abergele), Vera I. Arlett (Worthing), Constance Harper (Manchester), E. M. Mason (Belvedere), Nancy Pollok (Glasgow), Florence Overton (Stockport), L. M. Brown (Bicester), A. T. Riddell (Victoria B.C.), John Willwyn (Gobowen), and Miss Blackmore (N.W.5).

The usual premium of £2 for the best poem or poems submitted to the Premium Editor during the month (without limitation of subject) is continued, and six books will be awarded in recognition of "highly commended."

Not more than *four* poems may be submitted at the same time.

Every entry must be certified as original and as not having appeared in print, and the name and address of the competitor must be attached to the MS.

All MSS. submitted for these premium awards should be addressed to "The Premium Editor," the Poets' Fellowship, POETRY REVIEW Office, before September 1st, accompanied by stamped addressed envelope, or international coupon, and, if criticism is desired, 2s. 6d. (If a more detailed postal criticism is desired, 5s. should be sent.)

Entries must be either typewritten or written in ink on one side of the paper only, and contributors must be members of the Poetry Society or registered postal subscribers to THE POETRY REVIEW.

* * *

Mr. Walter K. Lewis provides 3 guineas for the best poem on "Disappointment." "I feel disappointment has an almost sovereign place in human life. None escapes its sting, all realise its bitterness. The most successful and fortunate in one way often feel it most keenly in another. Disappointed ambitions, blighted affections, want of sympathy and appreciation, failure of friendship, financial misery—in short, in more ways than I can think of we all suffer. I think it would be deeply interesting to hear what our modern poets have to say about it. Is it good or is it evil? Would human life be better without it? I do not want only poetical essays on the subject, though such might be beautiful, helpful, and illuminating, I should like the competition to include any narrative of disappointment that may occur to the writer's mind, or be within his experience." To allow Overseas readers to compete, entries, which must be addressed to "The Lewis Premium Editor," THE POETRY REVIEW, 16, Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.1, will be received up to December 7th.

THE SHAKESPEARE MEMORIAL VERSE COMPETITION.

REPORTS OF THE ADJUDICATORS.

The Shakespeare Verse Competition in aid of the Memorial Theatre Fund aroused world-wide interest and resulted in MSS. being submitted in many languages (including French, German, Dutch, Arabic, Greek, etc., etc.). In order to accommodate would-be competitors and subscribers in India, Australia, and other far-away places, the competition was extended for two months, and eventually, owing to the number and variety of MSS. received and the languages involved, the task of adjudication became delicate and complex. The various MSS. were classified according to language or group of languages and submitted to authorities qualified to deal with each, and their reports are appended. The most important of these reports naturally is that relating to the poems in English, which have been adjudicated upon by Dr. W. H. Garrod, who, as Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford, may be considered the highest official authority on poetry and whose assistance in this international poetry competition is a distinguishing mark of honour and appreciation. The various awards have yet to be collated and submitted to a joint Committee of the Poetry Society and the Memorial Theatre Fund, which will not be able to meet until after this issue has gone to press. They will give effect to the judges' reports as quickly as possible.

Professor Garrod reports :—

The Sonnet Class seemed to me to yield several poems of merit. I think the best of them the lines "England was then a land . . ." by Fred Beresford (A. 1660). In the same class I thought well of the following :—

A. 551. [The Hon. Eleanor Norton (W.1).]

A. 3365. [Vera I. Arlett (Worthing).]

A. 1610. [M. K. M. B. (Southampton).]

A. 529. [Mary Seton (Halifax, Nova Scotia).]

A. 3381. [George Buckley (Sydney, New South Wales).]

A. 3354. [Marie van Bylandt (Holland).]

A. 3371. [Albert H. Hughes (Dorset).]

A. 1618. [Dorothy Ewens (W.2).]

A. 1674. [A. A. Le M. Simpson (S.W.5).]

and if I had to arrange them in order of merit, this would be something like the order.

In the other two classes merit seemed to be scarce. Of the quatrains, the best seemed to me to be :—

A. 1682. [W. Marie Davidson (London, S.W.).]

A. 3382. [J. H. Smairl (North Sydney, Australia).]

A. 1650. [Agnes MacCarthy Hickey (New York).]

A. 1635. [Reginald Godfrey (South Australia).]

A. 1639. [Eva Dobell (Cheltenham).]

A. 575. [F. Stanley Shaw (Tasmania, Australia). (Quatrain 3.)]

That, again, is an attempt at an order of merit, placing A. 1682 (very doubtfully) first. But none of the quatrains seems to me up to standard. The whole class proved most disappointing.

Of the poems of pattern left to choice, I liked best A. 588, Lorna De'Lucchi (Switzerland), despite the weak last line. If I am to name a second it would be A. 579, Bertha M. Skeat ("Within a Casket"); if a third, A. 562, Alice Williams Brotherton (Ohio), but the third of these is in a trivial kind, I feel, and all of this class, again, I found disappointing.

Mr. F. B. Czarnomski, of the Polish Legation, reports:—I regret to say that after having carefully read the poems, I am obliged to advise you that they cannot be regarded as a serious contribution. The three authors seem to be devoid not only of talent and inspiration, but have only an inadequate sense of poetry.

M. D. Saurat, of Institut Français du Royaume Uni, reports:—

I have examined the poems in French and found them very bad; with one exception called "Ode a Shakespeare" by a M. George Lafoucade.

It is in several ways a remarkable production, chiefly owing to the fact that it is written in the stanza of Milton's "Nativity Poem," a most difficult stanza to use in French.

It is poetically very good, and mixed with a vein of satire against the usual type of Shakespearean commentator.

I would advise that some mark of distinction or other, according to your possibilities, should be awarded to this remarkable poem, which is technically and rhythmically an achievement.

Mr. C. H. Hourmouzios, of the Greek Legation, reports:—

I am deeply conscious of, and thankful for, the honour conveyed by your request, as communicated through His Excellency the Greek Minister, that I should read the Greek poetical contributions to the Shakespeare Poem Competition.

I have gone through the poems carefully—all written in modern Greek—and the following gives the summary of my conclusions:—

(1) The numerous "epigrams" sent in by Dionysius Tavourlais, a nonagenarian Greek actor at Athens (marked A 1667); also the poem by D. Mastrapas, Pyrgos, Greece (marked A 598); and the two "acrostic" epigrams (marked A 3380) contributed by

Madame Anna Aroni, a schoolmistress at Corfu, should be dismissed altogether. They really cannot stand any critical test and are devoid of any central idea or shred of originality entitling them to consideration.

(2) Of the other contributions, namely :—

(a) The poem by George Delis, Rue Chalcocondyli, 41, Athens (marked A 3385) ;

(b) The epigram by P. Gneftos, Alexandria, Egypt (marked A 597) ; and

(c) The sonnet by C. N. Constantinidis, Alexandria, Egypt (marked A 1662), the first (a) is, in my opinion, by far the best. Not only in boldness of inspiration and deep insight, but also in richness of expression and in a magnificence of motion it excels, arresting the reader's attention.

The poem, from the point of view of form or structural technique, does not present the classic essentials of a sonnet. Its two stanzas, formed together, as it appears, into the outlines of an altar, are constructed in what was with the ancient Greek prosody the "iambic tetrameter catalectic"—(mixed in the first stanza with three half-lines and in the second with three "trimeter catalectics")—and in modern Greek versification the "political" line, the most usual and dignified iambic in Greek folk poetry. The rhyme-arrangement is perfect and peculiar.

The epigram (b), of two quatrains, is also in iambic tetrameter catalectics, running upon four rhymes.

The poem (c), a pure sonnet of two quatrains and two tercets, is in iambic trimeter catalectics running upon five rhymes.

What may be remarked on this poem is that its idea extending over nearly the whole body of the sonnet deprives it of that simplicity of flow which is, and should be, one of the main features of a perfect sonnet.

I have much pleasure in enclosing herewith translations of the latter two poems, (b) and (c), the former in unrhymed verse and the latter in prose.

Mr. Herman de Vries reports on the Dutch and German MSS. as follows :—

Dr. Edward B. Koster (The Hague) sends a really distinctive first class piece of work which does credit to Holland in this competition.

By far the best poem in German is Dr. Max Mente's (Verovskova, Jugoslavia), with Mrs. M. Lobenhoffer-Riese (Bayenne), Dr. Richard

Plattensteiner (Vienna), and T. Ringelnatz (Munich) deserving of special mention.

Other contributions which may be commended are from Mrs. O. M. Robicek (Vienna), Zeno v. Siengalewicz (Vienna), Mrs. A. Kahn (Brunswick), Mrs. E. G. Sossidi (Hamburg) (in Greek), Oscar Büttner (Thüringen), C. J. C. Selbach (Haspe), Dr. W. Heinetz (Hamburg), G. Delos (Amsterdam), Lakos Andras (Asgód) (in Hungarian), J. H. Hüber (Switzerland).

A long dramatic poem *Under Blackfriars Skygger* (Under Blackfriar's Shadow), by M. Marius Montal (Copenhagen), is commended.

THE PROGRESS OF THE POETRY SOCIETY.

The Annual General Business Meeting of The Poetry Society, Incorporated, was held at the offices of the Society, 16, Featherstone Buildings, W.C.1, on June 10th, 1927. Mr. J. F. Tilly (Hampstead) took the chair in the unavoidable absence of the president. The hon. treasurer, in presenting the financial statement, said he was pleased to state that in spite of a year of exceptional difficulty owing to the general strike and the coal strike, which had affected all spheres of activity in the country, the finances of the year were satisfactory. Income had naturally been less than in 1925, principally under the item "Subscriptions to the Society and THE POETRY REVIEW," but increased revenue had resulted from auditions which had developed very satisfactorily and were reported to have become a recognised thing and to be responsible for a higher standard of verse-speaking throughout the country. He mentioned that the financial position of the Society during the present year had improved. For the first quarter the income had increased over £100 as compared to the corresponding period of the previous year, and he stated that the Committee had felt justified in more liberal payments being made for managerial and clerical work, which had been carried on more or less on an honorary basis. As treasurer he was pleased to support such payments, which were long overdue. The Executive had had pleasure in giving a special bonus to Mr. F. J. Huntingford as a mark of appreciation of his services during the past 6½ years on his retirement to concentrate on other affairs, and Miss E. Welch had been appointed clerical secretary. The treasurer also reported that the Society's work on behalf of the Shakespeare Memorial Fund had occupied their attention for the greater part of the year, and recitals had been held throughout the country, although not on so comprehensive a scale as had been anticipated, labour troubles again having handicapped the effort, which had,

however, enabled the Society to pay over to the trustees at Stratford-on-Avon £350, and he hoped that a further sum would be found payable before the Fund was closed. It was intended to complete the regional recitals in the autumn.

On the motion of Mr. Gridley, seconded by Miss Montague, the report and financial statement were adopted. It was resolved that, as previously, a copy of the financial statement should be supplied to any member desiring it, and Mr. Gridley stated that, as usual, he would be very glad to give further particulars relating thereto to any member of the Society. Mr. Gridley was warmly thanked for his continued and greatly appreciated services as general treasurer.

The hon. director presented his annual report, which was adopted on the motion of Miss Lloyd, seconded by Miss Montague. After surveying the developments of the year and particularly noticing the extension of the Gold Medal Examinations to the provinces and the intention to extend the verse-speaking work among elementary schools, the report pointed out that *THE POETRY REVIEW* had maintained its position as the one standard periodical of its kind in the English-speaking world. A remarkable recognition of this had been received from American readers following on the publication in January of Mr. Rawnsley's letter surveying the effectiveness and continuity of the Society's efforts. An abstract from these letters had been prepared for publication, but space had not then been found for them. This reference to Mr. Rawnsley reminded the meeting that the ex-president and elder councillor, who had remained throughout a loyal, consistent, active supporter of the Society, had now been lost to them, the letter just referred to being the last thing he wrote. The report concluded with a personal statement. Mr. Kyle pointed out that after having devoted during almost twenty years much time to the Society from which there had been no escape, he had had to seek more freedom of action and the delegation of responsibility, and had also taken up the editorship of a new monthly magazine. In consequence he resigned from the editorship of *THE POETRY REVIEW* and the hon. directorship of the Society, but an arrangement had been made with the Council whereby his experience and general assistance would remain at the disposal of the Society.

With reference to Mr. Kyle's statement, Miss Lloyd pointed out, as one of the original members of the Society and of the Council, that the whole Society owed its existence to him and a recognition of this fact should be recorded on the minutes. Mr. F. Irving

Taylor, who, as a professional literary man and journalist, the author of several volumes of poems, had undertaken to act as general editor, seconded Miss Lloyd's proposal, which was warmly supported by the hon. treasurer and carried unanimously.

No nominations or resignations having been received from the General Council, it was proposed that the elected members be continued with the exception of Mr. Irving Taylor, who at the invitation of the Executive had succeeded Mr. Kyle. Mr. G. Hawker was re-elected hon. auditor and warmly thanked for his past services, and votes of thanks were passed to officers of centres for their active continued co-operation in the interests of the Society.

An extra-ordinary general meeting of the Society followed to adopt certain alterations in the Articles of Association, which were unanimously agreed to. In consequence of the extension of the General Council the following extra-ordinary representatives on the governing body were elected :—U.S.A., Mrs. Alice Hunt Bartlett ; Canada, Mrs. Osborne ; India, Judge I. I. Kazi ; The Continent of Europe, The Rev. F. de W. Lushington ; Holland, Countess de Bylandt ; Poland, Baron Pilars de Pilar.

At the subsequent annual meeting of the General Council the Lady Maud Warrender was re-elected President-General and Mr. C. Oscar Gridley hon. treasurer.

A NOTE ON ROBERT BROWNING'S "O LYRIC LOVE."

Robert Browning wrote a quotation from Dante in his wife's Testament after her death : "Thus I believe, thus I affirm, thus I am certain it is, that from this life I shall pass to another better, there, where that lady lives, of whom my soul was enamoured."

Reunion with her, yes ; he also enjoyed a sense of her spiritual help. She assisted in the shaping of his great poem, *The Ring and the Book*. What she was at the time of *The Ring and the Book* was related to what she had been in her lifetime. The benediction she bestowed was anciently her smile. Her work went on. He could judge of its character by its results. And those results were of the same kind as he had known when she was alive.

He does not attempt to define her spiritual influence. That is to say, he does not explicitly punctuate his poem as : "Here and here Elizabeth guided me, suppressing a detail, encouraging an idea, developing a thought, teaching me to disregard my audience ('British public, ye who like me not'), blotting out this and hindering me from blotting out that." But in phrases of haunting allusiveness and beauty he hints at the intimate contact of her spirit

with his spirit. She is half angel and half bird. She is a messenger to him, and yet her communications are like the notes of bird music, only to be interpreted in terms of emotion. She is "all a wonder and a wild desire." She stands outside himself, moving him to admiration; and yet she is part of himself, a desire of his that has no ordinary scope or satisfaction.

She is the "boldest of hearts that ever braved the sun." He knew all along that such courage was in her, waiting for the emergency to test it. He could adduce, even as we can, the instance of her marriage. Now her courage is steady. She is kindred to the sun in boldness and the holier blue is her proper sanctuary.

She is also human. Death has not robbed her of humanity. She is still "red-ripe at the heart." Her sympathies are as quick as ever they were.

She has her chambers. She abides somewhere and waits for a call. Love's meinie is glorious. The call of poor groping mankind may blanch it. Nevertheless, she is ready to "drop down." Her spirit is unchanged. The call of his need of her awakens an instant response.

His song is his due to God who "best taught song by gift of thee." She was the breath of the music he produced, not because she sang herself, but because she was what she was. And so with bent head and beseeching hand he transcends the distance and the dark, and at the beginning of his task prays for an "interchange of grace."

Of all descriptions of spiritual help this is the simplest and truest. Grace is something invisible but pervasively real. Grace concerns the splendour of thought and the benediction of an intangible caress. These may still be interchanged.

He was looking forward to an immense and prolonged effort. He who was prone to be satisfied with smaller things had at length disciplined himself to the production of something "great"—great in survey of human life, great in plenitude of detail, great in bulk. He meant to skirk nothing and to scamp nothing. *Dominus Hyacinthus* and *Juris Doctor Bottinius* were to be as thorough as *Pompilia* or *The Pope*. She would know how to appreciate his effort. Her notes on his poems leave no doubt that it was her appreciation which had formerly sustained him. She had given him belief in himself, when no one else believed in him—when he "who praised and read and wrote was apt to find himself the self-same me."

He seems to picture her as listening to his reading of his work, or, perhaps, as following his thoughts as his pen traverses the paper.

He feels himself to be happily inspired. He looks up at her face, and the delight he sees there makes him proud of his achievement, assures him of its "whiteness," its far-shining truth.

Then he begins to flag and fail. What is the good of it all? How weary and flat is this going on! He is full of fear and despondency. And she comes again. It is as if she walked the barren spaces of his spirit and her footfalls caused the flowers to spring again.

ALLEN BROCKINGTON.

* * *

A correspondent claims that Francis Thompson, and not Alfred Tennyson, is the real airman's poet. Since the conquest of the air under the emergency pressure of the Great War, Tennyson's famous aerial argosies and pilots of the purple sunsets have been quoted time and again. But the *Hound of Heaven* has lines magnificently descriptive of the airman's epic challenge to the central blue. Could anything more dramatically picture the pilots of the R.A.F., who recently "bombed" London during a thunderstorm, than "Plashy with flying lightnings round the spurn o' their feet?" And might not our airman boast:

Across the margent of the world I fled,
And troubled the gold gateways of the stars . . .
Fretted to dulcet jars
And silvern chatter the pale ports o' the moon . . .
And shot, precipitated,
Adown Titanic glooms of chasmed fears.

* * *

The latest addition to the famous Oxford Books of Verse is *The Oxford Carol Book*. There is a link here, too, with the now no less famous English Hymnal, for the editors are the same—Dr. R. Vaughan Williams, Dr. Percy Dearmer, and Mr. Martin Shaw. This comprehensive collection of carols, both words and music, is undoubtedly the most important and scholarly carol book that has yet appeared, and makes a special plea for their use at all times and not only at Christmas. There are three forms—full music (for church and musical use), the words in a library edition, with full notes, and the words in congregational form, the prices being 6s. net, 4s. 6d. net, and 1s. 6d. net in cloth, 1s. in paper. Many of the carols will be issued separately, at prices ranging from 2d.

A TENNYSON COMMENTARY.

VA. THE METRES OF "MAUD."

The metres of *Maud* provide an object lesson : an object lesson to our ultra clever modernists, who, having decided that it is necessary that English poetry should be purified by changes of fabric and construction, proceed to effect this change by producing work which is so dominated by the craze for innovation not only as regards technique but as regards subject matter, that it ceases to be poetry at all. It is the fashion among these modernists to sneer at Tennyson because he was so very conventional, because even though he gave us music it was "common" or "pretty" music.

If these modernists would condescend to read *Maud* they would see that the despised Tennyson has done, and done perfectly, all that they "strive to do, and agonise to do—and fail in doing." For in *Maud* the metre is new ; it is an "innovation," and it is withal one of the most beautiful poems that has ever been produced in any language. The innovation in metre has been produced by one who is a master of his instrument. It is because he knows so thoroughly and has practised so well the laws which govern metre and rhythm that he is able to make these innovations and to make them successfully ; to handle his metre so that it serves his end, emphasises his meaning, and still enriches the quality of his verse.

The metre, as anyone who reads the poem can perceive, varies tremendously from the conventional quatrain to the majesty of blank verse, but the most striking innovation is the use of the delayed rhyme.

" Maud, with her exquisite face
And wild voice pealing up to the sunny sky,
And feet like sunny gems on an English green,
Maud in the light of her youth and her grace,
Singing of Death and of honour that cannot die,
Till I well could weep for a time so sordid and mean,
And myself so languid and base."

Tennyson uses his innovation with a master hand ; he narrows or widens his rhyme intervals to suit his theme, and sustains throughout a perfection of touch and of music that holds us spellbound to the end.

HILDA McDONALD.

* * *

The Highgate Centre resumes for the Autumn Session on Monday, October 3rd, with a reading from Christina Rossette and Alice Meynell ; October 17th, Ghosts, Witches, and Goblins ; November 7th, Cavaliers and Roundheads. The meetings are held at the Literary Institution, South Grove, Highgate Village, at 8 p.m.

REQUIEM

HEARKEN, for softly the lute-player sings.
Summer hath faded, and September brings
So many sorrowful and splendid things—

But this the saddest and the last of them—
He that hath hymned so many hopes and fears,
Played golden music through the golden years,
His eyes at last dim with a mist of tears
Fashions his own, his proudest requiem.

Now to the shrines and altars of Apollo
Dim with quiet incense wreathing through the hollow,
Spirits of silence, the hushed maidens follow

The last, the darkest sacrifice. O there
They have cast off their garlands of fair making,
Nor lightfoot wend, but sadly, mirth forsaking,
And mirth forgotten, in the aching, aching
Strange unimagined sorrow of dread prayer.

Lightly, O god Apollo, thou wast hearkening ;
Distant the music, and the words came slowly ;
There was a mist about the hills, and darkening

Shadows had filled the valleys of the earth,
Lightly, O god Apollo, nor aught fearing—
(It was the evening, and the time was holy,
The hour was thine, silver the stars were nearing,
The old stars strangely new with a new mirth)—

Watching the last light and the shadows creeping
Over the joy of earth that was thy keeping ;
When suddenly the tempest of wild weeping,

Strange unimagined sorrow and dread prayer
Trembled a moment on the wings of sound.
Apollo heard. As dew upon the ground
His tears fell golden. There was no rest, no sleeping,
But nightlong Apollo wept. And mystic, rare,

With never voice so hushed, nor eyes less bright,
The priest fanatic and his acolyte
Tended the darkling altars through the night

And heaped the rich offerings upon the flame.
 Till, dawn amid the forest glimmering
 Alive and raptured in each lovely thing,
 The dying lute-player began to sing,
 And peace the greater than the battle came.

“ I that once waked upon my dim presage
 A flame of fire, flicker and fail and falter ;
 Yet shall my laughter, down from age to age,
 Pass, and my sorrow—these shall never fall :
 Amid all pageantry, amid all strife,
 A sacrifice unto an unknown altar,
 They pass into the wizardry of life
 A slow unending dim processional.

Ye know none other than your god Apollo ;
 Yet there strange creeds, strange gods ye will follow ;
 There are strange temples over hill and hollow
 With richer, rarer, prouder sacrifice.
 Ye have known stars, immortal ; but then, ah then,
 They shall mock stars and temples of old love,
 Tear down the splendour from the stars above . . .
 Take then the old, the trusted gods again,
 The unforgotten April—and be wise.

I have known laughter as a man knows laughter ;
 I have known sorrow as a man knows sorrow ;
 And, as a man, known love, and lust, and slaughter,
 All earthly passion, and all earthly pain.
 So wakes and lives and dies to-day ; yet hearken,
 To-morrow looms, and out beyond to-morrow
 The seasons weary and the dim days darken—
 The hours of splendour will not dawn again.

Ye shall dream dreams, and I will help your dreaming—
 My words as starlight on the waters gleaming—
 To know the April wonder and earth's fair seeming,
 To know the heavens where the slow stars climb.
 But of all things man hath, by man to be holden,

These are the richest, these, ah these, are golden—
Old wine, old friendships, and all laughter olden,
Stolen from out the treasury of time.”

He ended, and the first slow Autumn rain
Soft through the silence as a maiden's tear
Breathed on the splendour of the earth again.
And day dreamed on, hushed with the wondrous thing.
The rain shone from the meadows, cool and clear,
Mid the last benison of the departing year ;
And summer faded with a golden smile.
Only September lingered and laughed awhile
Remembering.

J. W. NANCE.

FROM PLODDER TO PILOT

TO bide root-fast like yonder mignonette,
This maple—no ! Oh, no !
Better two feet, better a linked quartette
Of spinning wheels that magically go
To lands of longing, regions of desire,
Heights with their benison of sunset fire,
Glens with their spumy torrents, ferns a-drip
And scented like the airs that lightly slip
The dewy portals of a maiden's lip.

Man gave Earth's daughter,
The virgin, Water,
To mate with Fire,
And artiled their issue slave for life.
Mighty the wife,
Mighty and wild and treacherous the sire.
What of their first-born ? Loyal to the breed !
His goad compels the metal-muscle steed
In smoke and thunder down the shining rails.
His was the arm that stripped the outdated sails.
His is the breath that drives the laden hulls,
And makes the sea—

Vast theatre of typhoon and of tides,
 Of waterspouts and gales,
 Peopled with gulls—
 A splendid speedway where the liner rides
 Swiftly and safe and free.

Gone is the day
 Of ponderous oxen, of the trudging bay,
 Hauling the hooded van or freighted dray.
 Man the magician,
 Man the All-master,
 Chafed at the old the leisurely transmission
 Of his high word, his merchandise. The vaster
 His problems loomed the lordlier fell his fiat,
 "Let there be speed!"
 His hirelings sweat and bleed,
 But, amid strike and riot,
 His engines net for Mother Earth a tunic.
 He reads the dazzling runic
 Scrawled by the storm on heaven's high purple walls.

He fits his bridle to the fierce Untamed;
 And though defied, perplexed, unseated, maimed,
 He mounts once more,
 Pondering the hawk's descent, how buzzards soar,
 Till in the end, heady with wild new lore,
 Behold him rise
 Furred for the lofty rigors, glassed and strapped,
 His proud steed's muzzle set for farthest skies,
 Avid to range the perilous fields unmapped,
 Drinking like wine his swift propeller's tune.

"Ho! Brother Eagle! Race you to the moon!"

The future rings with challenge. Ocean—air—
 Invaded, known, subservient—now where
 Shall man's resistless spirit strive, and win?
 In strange arenas shall he wear fresh bays,
 And subtler conquests gloriously begin?

JULIA BOYNTON GREEN.

MIRACLES

*"Every hour of the light and dark is a miracle,
Every cubic inch of space is a miracle."—Walt Whitman.*

DUSK is a miracle, the open fire,
Fire-touched humanity—
Man-spirit touched by the flame spirit,
Unquenched, undrenched,
Burning.

A garden is a miracle :
Blooming flowers moved gently by the wind,
A liquid wind made red and peacock blue and green and gold
As it pours soundlessly through roses and passes into
pansies,
An orchid swirl ;
The scent that is born when the breeze mates with the
hyacinth ;
Tremulous rainbow tones when the sun woos rain,
Or the floating gossamer that is spun in the sunshine
After the dew.

Music is a miracle.
One golden trill of the wild canary,
A perfect cello tone, the aching ecstasy of a violin obbligato,
The voice of the mountain stream or of the wind in the
canyon,
A sweet voice singing in simplicity, or an organ fugue,
The nocturne of the first full stars on a moonless night,
Or the sweeping melodies of moonlight ;
The vast ensemble of the sea
To soothe the spirit that before has raged, has stormed, has
rolled in mighty tumult.

— All these are miracles.

Clean sport and all who play nobly,
Productive toil and all those who toil productively,
Constructive service, and those who serve wisely,
Creative thought and those who think creatively—
All these are miracles, and these :
The awakening of young life to love,
The exquisite wonder, the bitter-sweet of fear and yearning,
Home-making—father and mother task-bound,
Serving the hearth as though it were a shrine,

And children as young gods that they may grow and serve
their time and be also

Home-makers,

And builders of great nations . . .

And the grey years are miracles —

Life beyond the vibrant peak,

The calmer, broader slope which marks the rim of the world
we know.

Every hour is a miracle.—

Every life is a miracle if that life has vision :

Life without vision is no miracle,—

But who shall define vision ?

EDNA DORIS ROMIG.

AN OFFERING

I MADE a formal Garden,
And tiled it with a Cross,
That God my sins might pardon
And save my Soul from loss.

The walks are Alabaster,
I laid them on my knees,
Fit pavement where the Master
May softly walk at ease.

The Lawns are greenly paven,
Of growth a hundred years ;
I keep them closely shaven
And water them with tears.

I girdled them with Roses
Aclimb on poles of wood :
Within that wall reposes
A heavenly Solitude.

The Garden now awaits Him
Acceptance fain to win :
Oh, may the Weary Pilgrim
Vouchsafe to rest therein.

JOHN WILLWYN.

MAGIC

A WAY! Away across the meadow :
Far, far beyond the twisted sedge :
No one with me except my shadow,
Away to that green pasturage—
To my own secret solitudes
Of magic lakes and magic woods.

Sheep wander there that have no need
Of guardian dog or watchful shepherd :
No creatures born of savage breed
Live there,—nor jackal, wolf nor leopard :
And grateful cows contented sup
Knee-deep in fields of buttercup.

There, unobserved, I drink from fountains
Of healing water, pure and cool :
Or lightly climb on mystic mountains
By phantom trees and crystal pool :
And none may come with platitude
To wake me from my magic mood.

There may I laugh and sing and shout,
And run and play and madly dance ;
Yet none will ask what I'm about
Nor gaze at me with pitying glance,
Nor break the all-delightful spell
That reigns in my heart's citadel.

There may I listen by the hour
To blackcaps, robins and to rooks,
Well hid myself within a bower
Of swaying trees and sparkling brooks :
And no one may discover me
To interrupt my reverie.

There may I see bright fishes swim,
And warty toads in fancy dress ;
Or, standing near the water's brim,
May succour fairies in distress,

And wipe the tears from out their eyes,
And kiss their cheeks of tiny size. . . .

There may I dream of happiness,
Of wailing goblin and wood sprite ;
Of loving eyes, and lips to press. . . .
And dearest angels clothed in white ;
And when sweet music I do hear,
No one may come to interfere.

So, if I shall ascend, perchance,
One singing morning into air,
With my white angels for to dance :
'Twill be no good to seek me there. . . .
For I shall leave no sign, no trace,
And none will ever find the place.

HUGH B. COTT.

HEROICS

THE heroes of great Homer were good butchers.
They would have proved quite useful in our day.
(Of course, they were most regal, and men put chairs
Of justice for them by their own highway).

But still beef-witted Ajax, I should say,
Might make an honest living down in Glasgow,
In Corporation abattoirs to-day.
Lynceus, who would, I hear, have let the grass grow,

Might do as well as any with the sheep.
Brave Hector might have done to spread a muck-cart,
Or Heracles to help men with a stuck cart ;

Old Peleus might have scattered bone manure
(Than the garden sort it is, of course, more pure).
Odysseus, I am sure, could earn his keep.

T. E. CASSON.

SIMPLE AND COMPLEX

ANTHOLOGIES are, usually, merely easy, too easy roads for reaching a goal of spurious culture. Those who desire to find in Poetry that which voices those astral yearnings that transcend and, occasionally, defeat the mundane consciousness—these souls demand the whole work of a Poet and not passages or lines cut—sometimes ruthlessly—from the main source. Such cuttings lead, as we have said, to a spurious culture, the result of which is discovered in persons who assume that they know the work of certain poets because they have read some few verses under his name in an anthology. F. T. Palgrave had, doubtless, a better plea than later men in that the ordinary man or woman did not, in his day, greatly value poetry except that which came from the pen of a great name. But this is not the case to-day. Therefore there exists but one necessity for an anthology and that one Mr. Squire has chosen (*The Cambridge Book of Lesser Verse*, Cambridge Press). He frankly declares that he has turned away from acknowledged poets and has tried to rescue from oblivion certain gems by either little known (by the public) or anonymous authors. Especially do we welcome the anonymous work that he has thus brought together. Whether the trite morality of Isaac Watts's *'Tis the voice of the sluggard* was worth preserving, even in an anthology, may be, perhaps, a matter of the sensitiveness of ear or mind. This may be said also of Mrs. Hemans' *Oh! call my brother back to me!* But for the old-world-singing and the fresh, debonnaire spontaneity of the unnamed writers we can but be grateful to find them in this justifiable anthology, representing as it does, infinite labour and research. With what pleasure did we light on those entirely unpoetic but delightfully quaint lines of *If all the world were paper, and all the sea were ink*, which were our childhood's joy, especially the absurdly inconsequent verse:

If friars had no bald pates,
Nor nuns had no dark cloisters;
If all the seas were beans and peas,
How should we do for oysters?

From the true poetic side how beautiful is Francis Quarles in his lines on the quotation from Job. He begins as if he were addressing some dear object of his love: "Why dost thou shade thy lovely face? O why, Does that eclipsing hand so long deny the sunshine of thy soul enliv'ning eye?" and in this exquisitely tender vein he adjures his Lord. To lose oneself in these older poets is akin to spending happy hours in a well-tended old-world garden; what gentlemen these pleasant poets were! They might clip the yews into queer shapes, but they did not fling rotten clouts before you and cry "This is realism; if your stomach turns, it is because you are a poor prejudiced, hide-bound creature." Truly Mr. Squire's company of singers are very pleasant folk. Coming down the centuries, we should not, ourselves, have included the two poems by Herman Melville. His magnificent prose is his truest poetry; by contrast he seems somewhat belittled in these two specimens; the fire, and the amazingly chosen words, so penetrating in his prose, are here absent.

It is salutary to recall at times the passionate affirmation of the late Darrel Figgis on the vexed question of major or minor poets: he wrote that "the main difference between major and minor poets is—roughly—this, poets who have something to deliver that is more to them than life, more than form, and more than any skill of speech . . . and poets who are concerned with making well-wrought poems without any particular respect to any particular spiritual vision that those poems have to deliver." To "deliver something that is dearer than life" postulates the intense pangs of giving birth, and whether we so formulate it to ourselves or not, it is the evident inexistence of this travail of soul in minor poets that finally sways the judgment of their efforts. It follows, therefore, that, albeit we may be charmed to dwell for a period with those gay anonymous authors, to whom the eyelashes of their passing an oft-replaced Choc or Cynthia seemed of more importance than the passing of a dynasty. Yet we know it is but a shallow artificial lake beside which we take our pleasure. A man's *Collected Poems* (*Poems*, 1914-1926, by

Robert Graves. W. Heinemann) must, if we are to value the volume, reveal some ultra-conscious knowledge or intimation which, to quote Darrel Figgis once more, "can only be rendered in the metaphors, imagery and emotional rhythm of Poetry." Mr. Robert Graves appears to consider that the dates on which his lines were written have a deep significance, for the portentous words "Mainly 1914" or "Mainly"—some other date, heads the several pages of his *Collected Poems*. Is this designed to serve as a clue for a future biographer, should one ever arise? Except on this somewhat arrogant position we see no adequate reason for a chronological arrangement: good work or bad remains good or bad whether it came into being in 1914 or 1926. Under the insistence of these dates the author has, we suppose, felt bound to include many entirely trivial efforts, such as *Mirror, Mirror, Vain and Careless*, *The Sewing Basket*, and the lines *To an Editor*, this latter being no more than a rhymed letter such as many persons have penned but never considered worthy of preservation. How seriously these moderns take themselves! Here is an easily rhymed effusion gravely holding its place as a "poem" or even has been accorded the dignity of a footnote to the purport that it was "taken in good part." Verily, as Mr. Graves himself says, "We are not Virgils, but one night in twenty: when we should step our masts we trundle hoops." Let hoops be trundled by all means if such trundling brings any lasting satisfaction, but, in the name of Virgil, do not call attention to it as if it were an important and epoch-making deed. To turn to the more serious work, there is a long piece on *The Marmosite's Miscellany*; there is wit in plenty in this, but is it not a monkey wit, when all is said? That is not to say that we did not rather enjoy such lines as:

—of Masfield, astride on his notable nag,
 Its name was Right Royalty, out of Grand Slam;
 Of Bennett eating ortolans from a paper bag;
 Of Davies at play with a lodging-house lamb;
 Of Shaw's manifestos signed with "I am."

As a skit it is clever, but—from the standpoint of poetry

as a vision, as a demand to deliver that which is worth more than life—is it Poetry? Even from the lower standpoint of “form” what can ear or eye say to

More learned than Moses, more holy than Christ,
And every honest Mussulman loves sherbet iced.

In the *College Debate* Mr. Robert Graves again shows us how the petty “to and fro” arguments on verse occupy his mind; all such lines *may* be of interest some fifty years hence as illustrating the strange trend of present-day authors, just as old commentaries on the prophet Isaiah interest the curious; but who would exchange the wittiest commentator’s dictum for the thunder-roll or deep music of the prophet himself?

In *The Corner Knot* a poem on first hearing Mozart, Mr. Robert Graves seems to lose his professed desire for “wonderful words no one could understand” and his intent to in “Writing And reciting Straight ahead, without let or omission, Just any little rhyme In any little time That runs in my head”; and the result is a haunting thought in melody. How strange is Poetry! You may turn away from lines that clash, lines reminiscent of corks burbling from bottles to even stanzas over which is flung a certain cloak of dignity, and yet here—Poetry eludes you. Mr. Herbert Jones in *The Dwellers in Dusk* (John Lane, Bodley Head) writes “If every noble aim and high endeavour Must sink at last beneath a deadly weight, That neither moves nor lifts nor lightens ever”—and concludes with “No science and no art Can ever make that tragic riddle clear,” we agree, but with what a heavy heart; this Longfellowian morality, this banal conclusion is verse bound beneath a blanket heavy with age-long perspiration! And yet the author reveals in many other poems his love and also his appreciation of the Beautiful, but ever with the muffler of moral platitudes about his ears; insomuch that old Triton might blow his wreathèd horn till doomsday, our author would not recognise the wild untrammelled notes, or, even hearing them, would conclude they were the last words of a comfortable sermon

intended. "To warm the heart and melt it with charms against the cold—To bring the heart that felt it the courage to grow old." Oh! echoes of Ella Wheeler Wilcox! These echoes receive their reward: they convey a sense of comfort to some minds, no doubt.

The Poet has this affinity with Bunyan's hero—he is bound to tread a path on either side of which are pitfalls, and nothing but his own high endeavour, and the quality of his spirit, can save him from slipping and being engulfed. There is the pitfall of modernity, to say something new at any cost; the pitfall of form, a chiselled beauty without life, by no means valueless, but resembling the army of Ezekiel's vision before the Spirit of God had breathed upon them. In this respect, the sonnet holds the greater temptation to the artist: it is built upon architectural rules. A great sonnet is a perfect thing, but, failing perfection, is apt to show the scaffolding and the plan too evidently. Milton's sonnets march like an army with banners (Mr. Robert Graves, by the way, calls him a "monstrous Milton," who "phrased so disdainfully, composed so painfully" his *Paradise Lost*). On the other hand, Elizabeth Barrett Browning's sonnets have their birth in emotion, but an emotion profounder than all usual and mundane conception, so that her passionate lines soar above and beyond mere emotional stress. It is this pressure of an immortal conception that causes, and results in, the great sonnet; the intellect alone cannot achieve it. In the volume entitled *Road Royal* (Cecil Palmer), Mrs. Alice Hunt Bartlett has brought together her sonnets, with other poems. Her life evidently has found its refuge and its joy in poetry. Of the sonnets, their excellence is occasionally handicapped by a kind of inadequate conclusion; the one *To Sir Ernest Shackleton* gives us, as it were, a vision of the undaunted soul of the man passing "the sun's last rays," but whilst we should be left in the hush of that sailing west, we are brought up with a painful jerk against a truly barbaric closing line: "Oh sceptic hush, you call that Death, you jest!" Read this in a low or a high voice, alter even the punctuation, setting it thus—

"O Sceptic! Hush," yet it remains a stumbling stone. Another commences very musically, with a flute-like air, "I walk the velvet ways of soul's desire"; the octave is admirable, but, alas! in the first line of the sestet we are brought down to prose, "Whence come they, what, these eeries of our thought?" This "what" brings the flying feet to a standstill, we are unable to pass it; it is reminiscent of those alarming conversationalists who punctuate their speeches with "eh, what?" Of course, it may be that the English ear receives a shock at expressions that the American mind has long since accepted. Only on this supposition we imagine the author could leave such a line as "That God is that unkind," and, in *The Anniversary*, "None other shall sit beside me though the ages run Amok." This harsh word might not be out of place in a colloquial poem, but in a sonnet, as in a cathedral, nothing unworthy should be admitted. The poem, *Nikolai Lenin* is finely conceived, it marches well, and is full of insight, only the last line drops, both in sentiment and in feet. Also we would ask, are the italics, so frequently used, necessary? They should not be. The power of the words should be dynamic enough without any underlining. With so much of excellence, could not the whole be greater? We honour a poet by demanding the best. To Rodin, working in a fury of compelling energy, a slip of the chisel can be forgiven, but where an overmastering force is lacking the finest workmanship must compensate. On what grounds, therefore, can we accept *Stuff and Nonsense* from the pen of an author of elusive delicate fancies? Mr. de la Mare has charmed many readers, and the less they understood him, the more deeply they have been charmed. But the jingling rhymes of *Stuff and Nonsense* will not appeal to the young, and can hardly amuse the old. What child would find any joy in the Bishop whose desire was "To wit, to join in the wild *Te Deum* that echoes through the Athenæum"? or in "The mermaid swimming quiet by the combings, where the keelson hawse-pipe yares, inwedged him to her bosom like a porpoise at its weaning"—a hideous simile,

made more hideous by the "picture" accompanying it? Its best epitaph is the author's own words, "when they said, But the waste of time, temper, and taste!" With regard to *taste*, an astonishing thing was said in the last issue of this REVIEW. Mr. Casson declared, as "one having authority," that Rossetti's poetry "is an elaborate confection," and that Francis Thompson's *Hound of Heaven* is intolerable. He seems to have ransacked some unknown Catholic glossary, and added to his beautiful words of ritual some exceedingly ugly words." Mr. Casson finds Wordsworth's poetry "nutritious and wholesome as bread." But bread is the prose of life, poetry is the wine. Thank Heaven, Wordsworth gave us more than bread or we might choke! We dare affirm that, given Thompson's passion, not one word of the *Hound of Heaven* could be altered without poetic disaster. Flannel is good, but when we are warm, are we to forgo all delight in jewels? The walls of the New Jerusalem are built on the foundations of precious stones; Mr. Casson might, presumably, find them "intolerable," preferring good thick cement: and what are words to the poet but jewels wherewith he enchants us? Also, be it noted, emeralds, sapphires, rubies and amethysts cannot be fastened to worn-out clouts or on poor perishable material. The foundation must be as durable as the workmanship. Bread and flannel are the right of the convict, but a king demands bread and wine and costly raiment. The pity of it is that so few poets are kings!

ARTHUR HOOD.

GREAT SPACES

NOT dim deep woods at dusk, drooping and dense
 Nor Summer hazels and tall cedar trees,
 And singing larks, and humming honey-bees,
 And little churches filled with faint incense;
 Nor tiny timbered cottages from whence
 There blows the scent of flowers; no, not all these
 Can ever cool the love and dim the sense,
 Or calm the call for wider lands and seas.

Let us go back to where the mountains are,
 To tides and elements that never rest,
 To broad horizons, with a single star
 Swung on an emerald sunset in the West ;
 For we, who heard the waves upon the shore,
 Are restless wanderers for evermore.

CARLA LANYON LANYON.

BEAUTY

A DARK-EYED woman, with the world for lover,
 Most fugitive, most perilously sweet ;
 Immortal Beauty holds dominion over
 All she may meet.

From dawn of life till close man woos her ever,
 Seeking to bind the tameless, cage the free.
 Yet will her perfect form yield to him never,
 Virgin is she.

I saw her spirit, like a white flame leaping :
 And now within me stirs the great unrest ;
 For I must follow, night and day unsleeping,
 The quest, the quest !

KATHLEEN M. BOOTHROYD.

EPITAPH

HERE did they bury me
 Under this mould
 When I was old.
 On a bough merrily,
 Under the sky,
 A thrush may be singing,
 Summertime bringing
 Hope that must die ;
 Or the leaves may be fallen,
 Darkened the sun.
 All may be gone—
 All of God spoken,
 All by men known.

F. KEMP.

MODERN GREEK POETRY—IV

SOUTSOS.—RANGABÉ.—BERNARDAKIS.

BEFORE we speak of the brothers Soutsos and of Rangabé we must carry ourselves to Constantinople, as it was before the War of Independence—that is to say, when it was the capital city of the Hellenic nation and the centre of the Greek aristocracy.

Since the capture of Crete in 1669 it was from this aristocracy that the great dragomans of the Porte were selected, and from 1716 onwards the rulers of the two Wallachian principalities on the Danube.

This fact contributed to the increase and enrichment of the aristocratic families, dwelling in close community at Phanari, whither in 1602 the Œcumenical Patriarchate had been transferred, after its third expulsion from its former asylum. Side by side with the Church there was at all times maintained a school of higher education where the best-known masters taught ancient Greek with immense zeal.

But the distinguished pupils also received instruction in Arabic, Persian and Turkish, which they learned to write even better than the Turks themselves, with all the fine verbal shades by which adulation is expressed more artistically than in any other language. Thanks also to their diplomatic functions, they acquired a thorough knowledge of Italian and French, and knew by heart and often translated the tragedies of Racine and Voltaire. Thus they became familiarised with the European mentality, with the result that these young *fils de famille*, so Greek at heart, were at once Byzantine in tongue, Westerners in manners, and Easterns in practice. Being in direct touch with politics through the foreign embassies, they were friends of Russia, England or France, their personal connections determining the choice. In all this a great part was played by the women, whose culture and charm were exceptional; they acted, or even themselves translated, French plays. One of them, indeed, did more: she produced two masterpieces of her own, for she married a Frenchman and became the mother of the brothers André and Joseph Chénier, who

by their Greek learning won for themselves so splendid a position in the French Parnassus.

Incidentally the Phanariotes also cultivated poetry. We have seen that Christopoulos wrote a considerable number of poems, chiefly for ladies. Before him a large amount of verse (strongly seasoned with Turkish sentimentality and Turkish vocabulary) had been penned by insignificant versifiers, Dragoumanakis, Jakoumis, Lampadarios, and others still worse, having only an Oriental education. Acquaintance with the Gallic Muses—especially Melpomene—had a better effect. Among the Phanariote contemporaries of Christopoulos, two cousins, both called Ἰάκωβος Πίζος, were distinguished as *hommes de lettres*—the first, who had been nicknamed Neroulos, and his cousin, who assumed the Byzantine family name Rangavis, and in French Rhangabé. The latter translated Vergil's *Aeneid*, in modern Greek hexameters, Racine's *Phèdre* and Voltaire's *Zaïre*. Rhizo Neroulos gained a greater distinction. The French editor of Nonnus, Διονυσιακά Comte de Marcellus, in his prologue gives an excellent picture of Rhizos as a scholar and a poet, who had written a comedy, *très spirituelle* Κορακιστικά against the doctrines of the famous Coray, and a heroic poem Κούρκας ἀρπαγή (The Rape of a Turkey), in which he ridicules the Phanariotic society. After the revolution Neroulos was obliged to leave Constantinople and settle at Geneva, where he gave lectures in modern Greek literature *dont Genève s'émerveillea*. They were published twice in French, in 1827 and 1828, and were translated into Dutch at Amsterdam in 1829, and into Italian at Palermo in 1842. In 1823 a tragedy by Neroulos was published in Leipzig called *Aspasia*, having for its subject the death of Pericles. The work is very trifling in value. In 1876 the French Marquis de Queux de Sainte Hilaire published Neroulos' Ἀνέκδοτα ποιήματα (Unpublished Poems), which added nothing to his reputation. As a matter of fact, all these Phanariote poets, writing for a distinguished circle and for the Greek theatre of the Hospodars, were typical *dilettanti*.

II

Phanariotes were also the two poet brothers Soutsos, whose mother was the daughter of Neroulos. Their father, Constantine, belonged to the Francophile party and was an admirer of Napoleon the Great. He brought up all his children in ideas of liberty, and in 1820 sent his eldest son Demetrios, together with Alexander and Panayotis, to Paris. Alexander was then seventeen years of age, and Panayotis fifteen.

In February of the succeeding year Alexander Ypsilanti with three thousand followers entered the Danubian Principalities, calling upon the Greek nation to rise against the Turks, with the empty promise that "a mighty power would defend our rights." Demetrios Soutsos, who had now reached man's estate, hastened at once to enrol himself in this small phalanx of enthusiastic youths, which took as its name the *Ἱερός Λόχος*, but the sole achievement of which was to perish more heroically than its predecessor, at Dragatsani (June 7/19, 1821).

The glorious death of his brother and the Greek victories subsequently reported would not let Alexander sleep easily in Paris. Towards the middle of 1825 he set out for Greece, intending to throw in his lot with the garrison of Missolonghi, which was then besieged, and where Byron had died a few months earlier. Happily Miaoulis dissuaded him, and Alexander betook himself to Nauplia, then capital of the Peloponnesus.

How alien this Europeanised young man was to the manners and social conditions of Greece, now in the throes of the struggle for life and death, is proved by the very first poems, which he then composed and published by means of the printing-press at Hydra. Apart from the actual fighters, whom he admired whole-heartedly, all the other elements of society, the clergy, the gentry, above all, the quarrelsome insurrectionary government and its ministers, struck him as laughable. Moreover, at that time in France Béranger was at the height of his fame, and Alexander, having a strong bent for imitation and chaffing, took up

the scourge of satire. He set to work on the Greek character.

Δύο Γραικοὶ γνῶμ' ἑκατόν. Ἀπὸ αὐτὰς καμμία
Δὲν ἐκτελείται πώποτε.

("Two Greeks, a hundred minds. Of these not one is ever carried out.")

And as even here they were divided, he added: "No one has ever remained a Greek. One is a Frenchman, another a Moscovite, and the third an Englishman."

Of the politicians he said: Καθεῖς των εἶναι ἢ οὐρά ἢ κεφαλὴ φατρίας. ("Each of them is either the tail or head of a faction.")

It may well be imagined these satirical outbursts made him enemies. Alexander was compelled to seek safety in Athens; on the way he was set upon and only escaped with his life, it is related, by a recital of humorous verses.

But Soutsos was no laughter. On the contrary, he was a melancholy nature, always out of joint with everybody, even with himself. His ironical poem to his clothes, which had grown shabby, is typical of his peculiar bitterness.

“Φιλοσόφει, μὴ λυπεῖσαι, φόρεμά μου γηραλέον,
Εἶχαμεν τὴν ἐποχὴν μας, ἤμουν νέος κ' ἦσο νέον.”

("Be a philosopher! Grieve not my aged suit,
We have had our day. I was young, and so were you.")

One of his most popular songs is that in which he portrays, with much sympathy, a starving and blind soldier from Missolonghi.

Ἐτυφλώθηκα, δὲν βλέπω τῆς Ἑλλάδος τὰ βουνά
κιὸ ἐλεύθερός της ἥλιος στὰ ματάκια μου δὲν λάμπει.

Having excited considerable enmity at Nauplia, he made his way back to Paris, where he published, in French, his *Histoire de la Révolution grecque*, by an Eye-Witness (1827). This he sent to Chateaubriand, from whom he received a laudatory acknowledgment. On his second return to Greece he produced his comedy Ἀσωτος ("Prodigal"), in which he did not merely imitate Molière. Shortly afterwards he declared himself the enemy of the President John

Capodistria, who had abandoned a brilliant position as minister in Russia in order to work in Switzerland in help of the Greek cause. The President was very popular ; but Soutsos, a Francophil, had joined the opposition, and was not satisfied even with satirising the great statesman. When Capodistria fell a victim to political assassination, Soutsos did not shrink from extolling the murderers as tyrannicides. More bitter still were the insults he flung at John Capodistria's brother, Count Agostino, who had temporarily undertaken the presidency.

When finally the new king Otho arrived from Bavaria, Soutsos' enthusiasm was of the duration of a rose. In the place of the King, still in his minority, the government was carried on by three Bavarians, acting as regents. Soutsos, no longer content with satires, began to publish a newspaper, *The Hellenic Balance*, with the result that he was prosecuted and thrown into prison. It was then that he penned the ironical line which has become proverbial: *Εἰν' ἐλεύθερος ὁ τύπος, φθάνει μόνον νά μή γράφῃς.* ("Free is the press, provided only that you do not write.")

On his release he fled to Switzerland, whence he returned, bringing with him an epico-lyrical poem entitled *Περιπλανώμενος* ("Wanderer"), an imitation of Byron's *Childe Harold*, not without lines, however, picked from Lamartine and Filicaja. Its first lines are addressed to Greece, and run as follows :

Χώρα μεγαλοφυΐας! . . . εἰς τοὺς κόλπους σου τὸ πάλαι
 ὦ πατρίς μου, αἱ ἰδέαι ἀνεβλάστανον μεγάλαι.
 καὶ τυραννοκτόνον ξίφος κρύπτοντες ὑπὸ μυρσίνας
 οἱ Ἀρμόδιοι ἀνώρθουν αὐτονόμους τὰς Ἀθήνας.
 Ἄλλοτε θεοὶ ἐπάτουν τὰ ἐδάφη σου καὶ θείαν
 ἔτι σήμερον ἡ γῆ σου ἀναδίδει εὐωδίαν
 καὶ ἡ αὔρα τοῦ Ζεφύρου
 Ψιθυρίζει τὴν ἀρχαίαν μελωδίαν τοῦ Ὀμήρου.

("Land of Wisdom, from your bosom, oh, my fatherland, great thoughts came forth in days of old
 And Harmodii hiding their tyrant-slaying sword under myrtle boughs restored freedom to Athens.
 In days of yore gods trod your soil and to-day

Still a divine fragrance arises from your earth and Zephyr's breeze murmurs the ancient melody of Homer.")—Translation of Mr. Chroussakis.

He was not long in renewing the assault, and after some new cantos added to the *Wanderer*, he published a new satire, aiming at King Otho in person. The young ruler was not distinguished for ability, great or small, and Soutsos, who was a devotee of the French ideas of 1830, clamoured for a constitution. He was once more prosecuted, arrested and acquitted, but again compelled to fly, this time to Belgium, where he wrote two fresh comedies. In September, 1843, the people and army at Athens rose and extorted a constitution, and the poet returned to Greece to enjoy the new charter of liberty. This time he fell foul of the constitutionalists, and came very near being stoned by the mob in Hermes Street. Again he fled and again returned, bringing the first cantos of his *Τουρκομάχος Ελλάς* ("Turk-fighting Greece"), in which, amongst other borrowings, figures Milton's Satan. But I do not know what Voltaire, who found even Milton's Satan "*une facétie abominable*," would have had to say of Soutsos' Satan.

After giving the public the Fourth canto of the *Wanderer* he was forced to seek shelter in Constantinople, whence he reappeared, bearing Canto Five, with the following lines concerning Otho: "Who is the oppressor of the people? What is his name? Is he a Greek? Whence comes he? What are his title-deeds?"

On this occasion he was locked up eleven months, and when he was released he found a new pretext against Otho, and fled to Paris. His anti-monarchical polemics had achieved success, however, and in 1862 the Bavarian king was driven out by a fresh insurrection.

But Soutsos, too, was a broken man. He returned to Greece without a penny, fell ill at Smyrna, and the high-born poet breathed his last in a hospital, on a pauper's bed. His final letter to his brother contains a poignant prayer to Jesus.

Hellenic Smyrna bestowed magnificent obsequies upon the poet, who was considered then the first among Greek poets, and fourteen years later Athens brought home his bones at public expense.

Almost immediately afterwards, by a natural revulsion of feeling, Alexander Soutsos began to decline in general estimation as a poet, and later was included in the not unjust condemnation passed by Professor Asopios upon the lyrical and dramatic works of his brother Panayiotis.

Panayiotis, who returned to Greece in 1831, had brought a western sentimentality with him. He wrote five dramas: *Οδοιπόρος* ("The Wayfarer"), *Μεσσίας*, *Βλαχάβας*, *Καραϊσκος* and *Άγνωστος* ("The Unknown"), which contain some good verses but no character and no plot. Nevertheless they have this feature in common with the plays of the great Calderon, that some parts of them are mere adaptations of alien works.

Panayiotis Soutsos had really caught all the Phanariotic defects—viz., immense vanity, mimicry of foreign verse and added an extravagant romanticism and, lastly, an affectation for the ancient language, as a display of profound Greek scholarship, which he did not possess.

But, on the other hand, it is undeniable that both brothers were facile writers of both verse and prose, and thus they exercised a great influence on the written language.

Alexander, in addition, had a real gift for satire which he carried from the Phanar to Paris, and there developed by imitation of Béranger. His short songs were very biting and give a complete picture of the little town of Nauplia. Sometimes we can distinguish people behind his poems. Thus the historical value of his satires is greater than that of Villara's. The chief characteristic of Alexander's life and poetry is that he is always posing as a great poet, persecuted for his noble ideas.

III.

A Phanariote also, and a relation and disciple of the brothers Soutsos, was the son of Jacob Rangabé, Alexander,

who was born in 1809 at Constantinople, and died at Athens in 1892. His wonderfully industrious life, covering almost the entire nineteenth century, exemplifies the efforts made by liberated Greece to come up intellectually to the level of the West. Young men of education were all too scanty, and the new state had need of them for many purposes, demanding perseverance and intellectual flexibility. In both these qualities, few could compare with ALEXANDER RANGABÉ.

He began his career, in the Military School at Munich in 1825, as an exhibitioner of King Ludwig I of Bavaria, but before he had finished his studies the Greek revolution was over. In 1830 he came to Nauplia, and under the Capodistria régime he taught in the Military School. It was at this time that he composed his most popular song: *Μαύρ' εἶν' ἡ νύχτα στὰ βουνὰ* ("Black is the night upon the mountains"), which will not perish.

Later he was appointed head of a department in the Ministry of Education, and during the reign of King Otho director of the Royal Printing Office. Subsequently he became professor of Archæology at the new University of Athens, figured amongst the earliest founders of the Archæological Society and the Museum, and initiated the excavation of the Dionysian Theatre. As author of *The Antiquités Helleniques*, in two volumes, published in 1855, he secured a wide reputation outside Greece, and was elected a member of many an academy throughout Europe.

But such distinctions counted for little with Rangabé. He always combined archæology and literature. He was a prolific contributor to Greek and French newspapers, edited himself two periodicals, and wrote novels and short stories, the scenes of which are laid in every clime and period. Above all other kinds of writing, however, he loved poetry. But even in poetry he remained an archæologist, and his example had no good effect. He tried his hand at the lyric, the epic, the epico-lyric, but was particularly drawn to the dramatic—especially after he excavated the Dionysian theatre. His plays included every species—

tragedies, comedies, mythical dramas, in which he revived the ancient metres and choruses. The plays, however, required staging, and Rangabé thus became the principal creator of the modern Hellenic theatre. He personally trained the first actors, whom he named ἡθοποιοί, and established the first theatrical company, or θίασος, as he named it. The greatest of his achievements, however, was his discovery of a woman willing to act. Owing to the long-standing ecclesiastical ban upon the theatre, there appeared no hope of discovering a young woman who would consent to take up the profession. At last Rangabé succeeded in unearthing one in some corner, and he relates how his first care before exhibiting her was to fatten her up.

In like manner this versatile Phanariote stood at the head of the entire social and literary development of young Athens, which he always considered as a revival of the ancient city, like his German teachers. Under the influence of ancient reminiscence, he initiated the poetical competitions, of which we shall speak more as we go on.

But when in 1854, on the outbreak of the Crimean war, Greece displayed open sympathy with Russia against Turkey, and Britain and France occupied the Piræus, Rangabé was called in as Minister for Foreign Affairs, and succeeded in reconciling Greece with the protecting powers.

After representing the University in the Chamber of Deputies, under George the First, he definitely devoted himself to the diplomatic service, for which he seemed to have been born. In 1867, when the Cretan revolution was at its height, he represented Greece in Washington and then in Paris, where his wit found many competent to appreciate it. After being Minister at Constantinople he was definitely appointed to Berlin, where he took part in the Congress of 1878, and was always considered as an eminent man. His novels were published in cheap German editions.

His personal charm was indeed exceptional, and his familiarity with foreign languages truly wonderful. He could joke wittily in five or six languages, and write verses

in French, English and German. He was an incomparable *causeur*, especially with ladies, even after he had passed his 80th year. The smartness of his repartees became proverbial. For instance, in the Congress of Berlin, as he was leaving with the Turkish ambassador, who happened to be Greek, he helped him to put on his overcoat, and when an Italian diplomatist ironically remarked, "See, Greece is helping Turkey," Rangabé replied, "Yes, but to go away." One of my colleagues related to me another of Rangabé's witty answers. A professor of theology asked him: "How do you explain the mystery of your eternal youth?" "It is a curious thing," he said, "that a theologian should ask for an explanation of mysteries."

With these natural gifts, Rangabé combined indefatigable industry, keen love of country, extreme modesty, so extreme that he even doubted his own powers, and absolute contempt for money. His only ambition was to bequeath a rich literature to Greece. From 1865 he began to publish his *Ἀπαντα τὰ φιλολογικὰ* in twenty volumes. But his dictionaries, his political pamphlets, his school books, his French *Histoire de la littérature grecque moderne* are not included. He also left *Ἀπομνημονεύματα* ("Mémoires") in two volumes (the third unpublished).

It is natural that such wide culture rarely reached great depth. Rangabé was always an admirable *αὐτοσχεδιαστής* (improviser). For instance, on sending his photo to a lady, he writes upon it :

Εἶν' ἡ εἰκὼν ὁμοία μου, ἂν νὰ πιστεύσω πρέπη.

Ὅμοία μου; τί ὠφελεῖ;

Ὅταν τήν στέλλω πρὸς ὑμᾶς τήν ἡθελα νά ὁμιλῇ,

Πρὸ πάντων δέ νὰ βλέπη.

("The picture resembles me, if I must believe it. But even if it does, what is the avail of it? When I send it to you, I would like it to speak and, above all, to see.")

When reading his works, you are never fatigued, but it is not often that you wish to read them again, because, even in poetry, he did not sacrifice sufficient time upon working out the plan of revising the completed work. Up to the end he preserved the phanariotic tradition of

looking rather to the surface—and he was able to imitate the form of all the great poets and writers. For instance, after reading Byron, he wrote his *Δασπλάνος* ("Impostor"). After reading Longfellow, he wrote *Γοργὸς Ἰέραξ* ("Quick Falcon"), a poem of American subject, admirable for its rich rime. Dr. Karl Dieterich compares Rangabé with Martin Opitz, the father of German poetry (*Geschichte der Byzantinischen und Neugriechischen Litteratur*, Leipzig, 1902, p. 181). But especially he had a mental affinity with Voltaire. As a matter of fact, a French critic, M. Georges Bourdon, called him the "*Voltaire de Grèce*." But while Voltaire was a malicious nature, Rangabé was the very reverse. Short in stature, with a quick gait, he remained always an *enfant terrible*, in the best meaning of the phrase. Of four tragedies *Οἱ Τριάκοντα* ("The Thirty Tyrants") is the best, of his three comedies *Ὁ Γάμος τοῦ Κοντρούλη* ("Coutroulis' Marriage") is the most successful, and of his innumerable lyrics the *Διονύσου πλοῦς* ("The Voyage of Dionysus") is his masterpiece.

On entering the University, Rangabé introduced the practice of prose and verse composition. This had its advantages and disadvantages. It was certainly so much to the good, that the art of creative writing came to be held thereby in some esteem, but, on the other hand, it was regarded as immediately connected with scholarship. Rangabé was himself no Hellenist, but from the time of his entering the University his verse gradually assumed an increasingly archaic touch. At the same time he made it his task to promote the foundation of poetry-prizes by his wealthy acquaintances, and in these competitions he himself was frequently the arbiter. Thus every year witnessed the production of epics, dramas, and lyric narratives, antique in theme and manufactured by young men, whose only models were the works of the brothers Soutsos and Rangabé himself. As Madame Juliette Lamber puts it, "*Faire des vers est chose presque naturelle en Grèce*."

Amongst the competitors figured no less a person than the University Professor of Botany, Theodore Orphanides deservedly famous as a botanist, but also a follower in the

footsteps of his archæological colleague. He was a Smyrniote by origin, and only about eight years junior to Rangabé. In his early days he had imitated Alexander Soutsos in writing satirical verses, in which he made fun of contemporary politicians. Later, however, he turned his hand to epic hexameters and epico-lyric poems, for which he was so regularly awarded the prize, that when, on one occasion, Rangabé bestowed the crown of victory upon another candidate, there arose a lively interchange of biting words between the judge and the judged.

IV.

In 1861 the University again received a new professor in the person of Demetrius Bernardakis, then twenty-seven years of age, a Lesbian by his birth-place, but a Cretan on his father's side. Bernardakis taught history, but he was also a Hellenist of the first rank, as was proved later, in 1888, by his great edition of the tragedies of Euripides. In this he sought to defend the traditional text against the arbitrary emendations of the critics, and its poetical merit against the strictures passed upon it by Schlegel. After obtaining the prize with his epico-lyrical poem *Εἰκαρία*, having for subject the touching poetess of the ninth century, he was sent to Germany, where in 1858 he published his drama *Maria Doxapatri*, by which he sought to divert dramatic poetry from the classical, Gallicising tendency imposed upon it by Soutsos and Rangabé, and to lead it in the direction of the English and German theatre. In support of this purpose he declares in his prologue that three only among modern nations possess a national dramatic literature, the Spanish, the English and the Germans. As a matter of fact, his heroine Maria, who goes mad, is a fine copy of Shakespeare's Ophelia. Later he composed a *Merope* and the *Kypselides* by which he finally put Rangabé's dramatic reputation in the shade. Still pursuing the tragic Muse after he had resigned his chair at the University, he published his *Fausta*, a powerful counterpart to *Phædra*, and he left unpublished his *Antiope* and *Nicephoros Phocas*.

It was not in vain that Bernardakis had studied Euripides, with whom he had two things in common, eloquence and discontent with existence. His feminine characters are the most powerful of the modern Greek stage. But they also talk too much. Bernardakis was so fluent that even when writing he allowed himself to be carried away into exaggerations and contradictions. Thus, in the Introduction to his *Maria Doxapatri*, he maintained as self-evident one theory of the Aristotelian "purification," whilst thirty years later he supported the very opposite theory again as self-evident. Indeed, his independence of opinion was great, paralleled only by his breadth of mind and learning. Of his prose works the best is the anonymous *Ψευδαττικισμοῦ Ἐλεγχος*, in which he rises out of mere grammatical technicalities into the philosophy of language and history, and eloquently advocates the rights of the nation's living tongue. Here are to be found, as Roïdes said, pages which can compare with the finest in Heine, Schopenhauer and Richter.

Certainly the poetry of the brothers Soutsos and the University professors came in for more than its legitimate share of admiration, firstly because criticism was still in its infancy, and, secondly, because of the many extraneous titles to esteem possessed by these poets. Later, when Athenian poetry modelled itself after the Ionian School, and the demotic prevailed over the archaistic language, their poetical creations came to be viewed in a different light and their fame, to use Macaulay's phrase, was not only condemned, but condemned with costs. There is no doubt that their work is not made to last, and, unfortunately, the drama is of all the flowers of poetry the most ephemeral. But when the Hellenic soil is once more covered with blossoming gardens, then will surely come the time when the noble names of such industrious, devoted labourers like Rangabé and Bernardakis will be justly esteemed and eulogised.

SIMOS MENARDOS.

The National University of Greece.

WORSHIP

HE is not now the Word
Made flesh, as once on earth
He came to birth,
When some poor herdsman heard
A stable was the place
To see his Face

But where the altar stands
A man takes bread and wine,
And in the shrine
And shadow of his hands
God's own Son deigns to be
For you and me.

Saint Mary, long before
Believed what Gabriel
Was sent to tell,
And we, who here adore
God of the human Name,
Believe the same.

ALLEN BROCKINGTON.

"AN IDEALIST'S MARRIAGE"

"IN her is the dream of my years," he mused,
Casting off care ;
"The days of our life will be calm, and yet
Passionate and rare.

"After our long sweet voyage of Lifetime
Falling asleep,
Obeying the Call (the Call that haunteth)
Of the infinite Deep."

But alas ! his vision fades into dreamland
And on his way
Silently steals around enfolding him
Wan daylight gray.

ARTHUR RUSSELL.

DYNAMICS OF AMERICAN POETRY

XIV: MR. COBLENTZ ON PRESENT AND FUTURE VALUES.

STANTON A. COBLENTZ, originally reviewed in Vol. XVII of THE POETRY REVIEW, is the author of:—*The Thinker* (Wm. White and Co., 1923); *The Destiny of Man*; *The Lone Adventurer* (The Unicorn Press, 5 East 57th Street, N.Y.); *The Literary Revolution* (Frank Maurice); and Ed. *Modern Am. Lyrics*; Ed. *Modern British Lyrics*.

The Literary Revolution is a serious and important study, written with great frankness, of modern literary expression in America, as set forth by "jaded minds and abnormal nervous conditions" which the unrest of modern life heightens, if not creates.

Mr. Coblentz asserts that "Surface values have indeed been sanctified and almost deified by the modern tendencies in spite of all our confused strivings after profundity—the worship of Visibility, of Surface Values and of Things Easy to Understand, and hand in hand with the cult of the Material and the Superficial, there goes quite naturally the creed of the Rational." Continuing, "One of the natural parallels of recent rationalizing tendencies has been the gradual submergence of the beautiful . . . beauty is one of the literary commodities no longer in demand . . . good taste is not one of the accomplishments of the more modern writers."

Mr. Coblentz points out that "the present era contains in abundance most of those factors which tend toward anarchy, confusion, hysteria and increasing reaction, and revolt . . . we stand at the crossroads in the world's history, civilization hangs wavering in the balance. . . . And all these developments are coming to a climax in our own age. . . . At first sight, it would seem that they would have one of two effects: either they would open the way for epics of the modern age, epics far vaster in scale than any that dealt with old Greece or Troy, or else they would leave our writers blinded and bewildered. . . . And it is the latter result, unfortunately, that has marked the course of modern social developments."

Striking at what is the underlying cause of the dilemma, Mr. Coblentz calls attention to the fact "first of all, the materialism of our era is certainly its dominating force" . . . "we have bowed down before rulers such as no past age has known, and our barons are our bankers, our kings our manufacturers and our great merchants; we have adopted a new religion, whose converts are numbered by the scores of millions; and the visible symbol of that new religion is the silver dollar and the Stock Exchange."

The pages bristle with admissions such as, "no previous age

could boast so many time-saving devices, no previous age seems ever to have been chronically so short of time." "It is from self-communion that the greatest literature takes birth. Wordsworth treading in lonely ecstasy the solitudes of his native woods and hills; Shelley seated in the seclusion of a pine grove, panting for the music which is divine, Spinoza meditating like an anchorite in the still privacy of his humble abode. . . . Imagine Keats writing his *Ode to a Nightingale* to the accompaniment of a shrieking and snarling steam shovel. Imagine Milton launching forth upon the organ music of a *Paradise Lost* while crushed against the wall of a subway express, or Dante finding need of a fanciful Inferno if he dwelt among brick ravines of a modern city. Imagine *Midsummer Night's Dream* composed to the raucous beat of jazz, or Gray's *Elegy* written in the space between a luncheon engagement and an invitation to tea, with the poet's watch on the table beside his typewriter!"

In the chapter called "The Decadence of the Imagination," Mr. Coblentz draws some very deadly parallels between the tried and proven beauty brought to us through the transmuting influence of a strong imagination, and the disciples of the Literal Realism which are of value to all writers.

In his chapter called "The Poetic Anarchy," we find this comparison, "In Great Britain it is true the conflict has never been so severe as in America, and the rebels have never been so near to ransacking the ancient strongholds; but even in Great Britain the struggle has burst out in certain quarters, while in the United States the revolutionists have entrenched themselves powerfully in the soil of their foes, have won engagement after engagement and have been threatening to batter down the resisting fortifications with their salvos of alleged verse."

In this chapter the reader finds an analysis of the elements that make for the older-proven beauty. . . . "Artistic Creation must always imply restraint; it must involve a certain sacrifice for the sake of effect; its function is to remould the gross material of inartistic expression into the sharply defined and chiselled product of art. . . . Still another fact overlooked by the poetic insurgents is that the rules of formal poetry are not always a hindrance; that often, they are of invaluable assistance." In concluding, we read "Whether the modern movement will indeed remain dominant is, of course, more than mere criticism can undertake to say."

To many serious minded lovers of America and Literature, many of these reflections have arrested their minds, and perhaps it is only

in the Everlasting-Optimism we may find comfort and permit ourselves to share with Lord Tennyson his inspired belief, "Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs, and the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns."

The Lone Adventurer is a work of the Imagination, based on that conflict between the inner ideal of man's spiritual vision and the external. Its 140 pages tell of the struggles of the soul to achieve happiness and truth. *The Adventurer* is a prince, born to riches and fruits of this life who leaves "it all" to go questing for a finer joy.

Quoting from *Road Royal* :—

To feed on bread not made by human hands,
A sweeter and a more exacting stuff,
Which only he who DARES, he understands
The crystal airs that blow on that steep bluff,
Where, should he reach the summit, her strong hands
Receive him . . . and it is enough . . . enough !

Edwin Markham writes :—

"I am glad to see this last creation from Stanton A. Coblenz's clean and dignified pen. Here are not snags and roots in the road ; all has a fine grace and smoothness of utterance. I am pleased with his real feeling and real beauty of expression. It is good to see Mr. Coblenz rejecting the jazz-mad tendencies of the times, turning his fine talents to this high spirited and beautiful treatment of a vivid human story."

The pages are filled with fine expressions and lovely pictures and the pathos of the lonely quester ; and going over them a day recently with Mr. Coblenz, he pointed out to me the crown, as he sees it, of the tale which follows :—

And in the golden funeral-pyre of day
Mirrored in lonely waters mountain-deep ;
And in the stars, whose glittering display
Circled the desert sky with deathless sweep ;
And in the dawn, that through drab clouds would peep
Like some life-granting eye, Lodalga read
The mysteries of the living and the dead.

The mysteries of the heavens and the earth,
And all that was, and all things yet to be,
And those strange shadows gathering round our birth,
That lead, through rainy grief or rainbowed mirth,
To the last gateway of our destiny.

And, seeing what his lips could never tell,
Long did Lodalgá feel the magic spell.

The cycle of planets, drifting, drifting
Across the wastes of the eternal sky,
The light of suns submerged but newly drifting,
And light of stars that change but cannot die—
In these the secret of all things must lie,
And these are mirrored, as in fog-blurred glass,
In the cloud-glimmerings of the lives we pass.

All the fixed movement, and the slow progression
From light to dark, and dark to light again,
Like hopes and loves and fears in long succession
Or like the candle birth and death of men ;
All the weird heavens, closed to human ken,
And that grave flux and flow which seems to draw
Sun-swarm and satellite in age-old law—

These must be seen and known before one knows
The meaning hidden at the heart of time ;
But these are only shown to him who goes
Bleeding and footsore up those stairs that climb
To the forsaken peaks ; and all the grime,
The din and dust of man's affairs must fade
Before the immortal truths may be betrayed.

In a letter recently received Mr. Coblentz writes :—

"As I told you when I saw you, I am exceedingly pleased that you intend to review *The Lone Adventurer* in THE POETRY REVIEW, for I believe this to be one of the few poetry magazines which are an aid to poetry, and one of the few which has not lost its head and its standards in the panicstricken rush of modernism."

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT.

P.S.—Mr. Hudson Maxim, who died recently, was the author of *Science and Poetry*, and *Philosophy of Language*, Funk and Wagnalls Co. (1910). I spent an unforgettable Sunday at "Maximpark," New Jersey, when he handed me his *Science and Poetry* book (from which we quoted liberally in THE POETRY REVIEW). The book is full of fine phrases, and I am proud to have it in my library. Hudson Maxim, born in Orneville, Piscataquis County, Maine, February 3rd,

1853, began his brilliant career as an engineer and inventor about 1883. His charming wife and companion whom I met that day (Miss Lillian Durban), he married in London, March 26th, 1896. During the hours I spent at Maximpark, he suggested a ride in his Ford, to which I assented, looking with some concern at his right hand, which had been replaced, through a powder explosion, by an able-looking hook. With this he drove the car at a break-neck speed on the edges of the precipitous hills surrounding Lake Hopatcong. The whole affair was one of the most exciting experiences, both mental and physical, it has been my good fortune to enjoy. He, with warmth and enthusiasm, assured me he would write a foreword to my first book of poems—and when I inquired how he dared say that, when he had never seen any of my poetry—he looked shrewdly at me and said “I was not born yesterday; you bring the book along and spend a week with Mrs. Maxim and me.” At this interesting meeting, he said in parting “Come back soon, I am getting old and I may be gone”; though his vigour and health and mind carried no suggestion of anything ever but the *immortal*.

I am saddened, too, by the death of Ruth Mason Rice, originator and hostess of the “Book and Craft” luncheons. She wrote some delightful poetry. Outstanding in one’s mind is her “Japanese Print.” She included in her luncheons many interesting speakers. Her “Book and Craft” bulletin was a valuable addition to the informing magazines on current writers, and she was a staunch POETRY REVIEWER.

A. H. B.

TO BYRON

A GREEK EPITAPH

A DEATHLESS end in vain didst seek where rang
the battle’s call,
Yet even thus it failed thee not, thy sweet and Orphic lay;
And, while one fatal April morn the Gods and Muses all
Gave thee for fun’ral crown the sun behind the cloud-banks
gray,
Amid the moan of earth and sky thy warrior chieftains brave
Bore thee upon their shoulders strong upon a Spartan’s
grave.

M. MALAKASSIS.

SERVICE

'TIS truly said, we are but atoms of the world
So vast it baffles thought ; yet do we pause
To question : Whence—Why—Whither ?
Surely our presence here was known and wanted ;
Cause enough that we are. So also do we sleep,
And eat, dress and live as others of our kind.
Why, then, have we come hither ?

What is our special task in this great whirl
In which there is so much of madness,
So much gladness ?

Ah, do we smile ? Then must it be bestowed
From quickened hearts. Or do we dance ?
If so, its purpose but to measure joy.
The hurrying years :
Does their swift coming find us full of tears ?
Tears serve the souls who learn they are but golden weights
Upon the heart, dropped from Heav'n to give us poise.

Do we but live ? Such puny egos all.
Not if we steer our barque
Upon the sea so that the sun blinds not
High vision.
Nor let the waves beat back our Ark
When other poorer souls might link their lot
With ours. Thus as one cell, in touch with many,
We forge our link in the Chain of Destiny :
Welded as part of that humanity
Called
Heaven.

Our task to forge our Day in tears, or joy, or work,
So that we Carry On ; anon becoming forms
Of SERVICE.
This
The measures of an angel.

ESSAYS IN CRITICISM:

LANDED POETS.

WHEN I speak of landed poets, I mean poets who have possessed the land. In recent reading I have been struck by this quality in two widely different men from very unlike countries. They are A. E. Housman, of Shropshire, England, and Daniel L. Cady, of Vermont, in America. In each, something more than the poet speaks; more than the tradition of place newly synthesised; more than a *genius loci*. It is articulation of the chosen country so that even the rustic, who feels but never expresses what he knows, recognises a writer vibrant with his land, one who gathers into words and behind words the things that are natural impressions on the inner mind. Read Housman. You are in the company of one with whom the hourly phases of sun and shadow play as much within his vision as across the embowered landscape. He looks behind the eyes into the thoughts of the persons he meets and translates them with the country. The seasonal pastimes are a part of the picture—pathos and light-heartedness playing the scene. To a stranger, it bears home the daily permanent delight of the place. He can live equally well within the poems or within the country sung and be at home there.

Daniel L. Cady, in Vermont, is the acknowledged spokesman of the man who comes into the general merchandise store from the upper hill farm every Saturday evening; or of the man along the valley stream whose round of duties and round of thoughts are imbedded in the strata of Vermont; or of the village people whose customs are recurrent—corn-husking, greasing the boots, butchering in the Fall, town-meeting day, etc. We see the country through their eyes. In their especial vocabulary, he perpetuates the smack and savour and routine life which is even now almost a thing of the past—of *his* past. They were once a common neighbouring experience. It is interesting that the iterated rhythm in the majority of the verses found in *Rhymes of Rural Vermont* is that common to the self-made ballads of the lumber men in these parts. It has, hence, a swing and a beat, not from the nature of his subject, but from the people he sings.

In *Vermont Pasture*, the realism of the poem is obvious, but its effect is as intangible as the deeper flowing spiritual reactions:

“You have to work your tillage land,
And mow and hoe and plow it,
But, as for pasture, all you do
Is jest to sheep or cow it;

THE POETRY REVIEW

And you can walk jest where you please,
 Instead of round the edges,
 And Sunday you can go and set
 Upon the pasture ledges.

"You cross the brook on stepping stones
 You've hauled from out the mowing ;
 You own the stones and own the brook,
 Although it keeps a-going ;
 Then, past the logged-off piece you climb
 That's fenced with blackberry hedges,
 And then you sight the butnut tree,
 And, up beyond, the ledges.

"At last, you're there—you see your house
 And barn and both your medders,
 And way off North, the other farm
 You rent to Elmer Cheddars " ; etc.

Cady writes of *Vermont Foliage*. It made no impression on his earlier years, but then come these verses :

"Now all I do is jest to watch
 The resurrection of the year,
 Enjoy its height and see it blush
 And burn and disappear.

"A time there is for mortals when
 Enlightenment of heart descends ;
 You can't baptise it into folks,
 It isn't found through friends ;
 It comes and forms the inward sight
 That sees and understands,
 And when it comes, there needs no rite
 Nor laying on of hands."

Now we turn to English country in Houseman's *Blackbird* :

"When smoke stood up from Ludlow
 And mist blew off from Teme,
 And blithe afield to ploughing
 Against the morning beam
 I strode beside my team.

"The blackbird in the coppice
Looked out to see me stride,
And hearkened as I whistled
The trampling team beside,
And fluted and replied"; etc.

And *Spring in England* :

"Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Eastertide.

"Now, of my threescore years and ten,
Twenty will not come again,
And take from seventy springs a score,
It only leaves me fifty more.

"And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow."

I have taken sincerely many Nature poems to heart. But again and again they seem variously out of focus in passing through the poet-mind. Innumerable writers develop their effects experimentally—indirect approach and conscious dependence upon cadence and tone. They are interesting but not convincing. They never quite achieve the indigenous strain.

Carl Sandburg sings *The Illinois Farmer* :

"Bury this old Illinois farmer with respect.
He slept the Illinois nights of his life after days of
work in Illinois cornfields.
Now he goes on a long sleep.
The wind he listened to in the cornsilk and the tassels,
The wind that combed his red beard zero mornings
When the snow lay white on the yellow ears
In the bushel basket at the corncrib,
The same wind will now blow over the place here
Where his hands must dream of Illinois corn."

Here is a compact moment that stretched before and stretches beyond the interval of the poem. But somewhere has occurred an

intervening emotion which withholds the intrinsic feeling. It is as if the moment came and dropped away from him and he restored it mechanically. It never weathered within him.

Few New Englanders completely consider Robert Frost their true spokesman. His poems are filled, as silk is sometimes filled, strengthened by an element stronger than the original matter. Mystery or fear or a brooding sympathy may possess his poem. It may be carried along by this sweep of strong emotion, *perfectly* carried, as is a gaunt moment in a life which obliterates figure and feeling into one single content. Frost is markedly sensitised to his every subject, but the element of composition, the triumph of balanced art, the exalting pleasure in perfect finish, *first* enters in. It is as if he overrides his spontaneity with an artistic detachment. For example, read *An Old Man's Winter Night* :

“All out of doors looked darkly in at him
Through the thin frost, almost in separate stars,
That gathers on the pane in empty rooms.
What kept his eyes from giving back the gaze
Was the lamp tilted near them in his hand.
What kept him from remembering what it was
That brought him to that creaking room was age.
He stood with barrels round him—at a loss.
And having scared the cellar under him
In clomping there, he scared it once again
In clomping off—and scared the outer night,
Which has its sounds, familiar, like the roar
Of trees and cracks of branches, common things,
But nothing so like beating on a box.
A light he was to no one but himself
Where now he sat, concerned with he knew what,
A quiet light, and then not even that.
He consigned to the moon, such as she was,
So late-arising, to the broken moon
As better than the sun in any case
For such a charge, his snow upon the roof,
His icicles along the wall to keep ;
And slept. The log that shifted with a jolt
One in the stove, disturbed him and he shifted,
And eased his heavy breathing, but still slept.
One aged man—one man—can't fill a house,
A farm, a countryside, or if he can,
It's thus he does it of a winter night.”

Frost has expressed Vermont as a summer guest artist might his own adaptation from the original. This is all a matter of personal reactions. Every one has his own requirements and sense of values. Comment of this kind may only fix more firmly the exceptional pleasure another may have in his own personally accepted Nature poet. For me, A. E. Housman and Daniel L. Cady seem best to have possessed the land and sung rightly from their most excellent estate.

Springfield, Vermont. HELEN HARTNESS FLANDERS.

ATLANTIS RESTORED ?

To conceive beauty, or shape it, with the happy, consummate detachment and freedom characterising an earlier age—the Elizabethan, for example—is, I fear, quite impossible for us to-day. For we are moderns in just this vital sense, that we cannot quite detach ourselves from the finished product, which must always remain cold and unattractive without us. It is as if the spirit continued to cling to it long after the hand had fashioned it, keeping it alive, and stirring it constantly to an intenser life. It is not a thing complete in itself, self-contained, self-expressive, as it were—a symbol of nothing beyond its “own victorious fairness.” Form is no longer the frame to hold all its inwardness and life. The spirit has divorced itself from the flesh, and motive and sensuous form are no longer identical.

The most, then, we moderns can hope for, it seems to me, is an art which will reveal what is most inwardly significant and expressive in our reaction to man and nature—a sort of “art intime.” To seek to envisage the world or man as they are is to attempt, I am afraid, something beyond our powers.

Yet that is what George O'Neill (*The White Rooster, Boni and Liveright*) tries to do. He would let us have the sea, as it lay on the vision of Homer, in all its immense and grand impersonalness, with its own mysterious life, presided over by its own deities—a thing quite separate and apart from the spirit of man. But we stand to-day in another relation to the sea—in a more intimate relation. It makes us think so often of ourselves—some loss we have suffered, or of some personal sorrow or hurt, or even of death :

“I shall come back, as constant and as changeless,
As the unchanging, many-coloured sea.”

O'Neill would restore to us the woods in their primal glory, in their first burst of verdure, with the wonder of the first dawn still clinging

to them, the vision not yet dimmed by an eye "that hath kept watch over man's mortality." He would let us have man himself, lithe and free and buoyant in the wind, the eyes dilated with white light, the nostrils tingling with the new sensation of a newly opening world—a symbol of nothing beyond his "own victorious fairness."

Naturally he fails, as have failed greater modern poets before him. In the course of his verse, to be sure, a line, or phrase, or even a word, may flicker up with some bright image or fancy, but only to fade the next moment into that void and lifelessness which one experiences upon closing the slender volume. It is not the real world of flesh and blood, of earth and sky and water, that the poet recreates. It is a pasteboard fancy, multi-coloured, intensely imaginative, exquisitely and painstakingly wrought.

Of modern poets I know only one who has really succeeded in capturing this vision of the world in all its pristine comeliness, self-sufficient, self-contained, form never breaking down under the rush and influx of emotion or thought. It is Keats. But he had far larger poetic gifts than O'Neill; and he was more the poet by temperament. But even Keats, unlike O'Neill, did not depend solely upon this pristine loveliness, this vision of beauty salvaged from another time and another people. Apparently true to the tradition of all our great and original modern singers, he, too, has not only his grand mood, but his ennui and Weltschmerz. For love—realised love—was never vouchsafed him; and death was something more than an idle fancy with him. It was a passion. But O'Neill would go out to restore the ancient world of form and sense, single-handed, as it were, with nothing more to give of himself, of his own person, than this earnestness and high purpose. The result is he leaves us indifferent, cold, empty.

All the faults and merits of the work fall under this one aspect. Does it fail to move or stir us, is it flat and unconvincing? It is because we do not see the man at the back of it—it is as if this creation of his were suspended in mid-air by some trick or sleight of hand. Does it bear the impress of high workmanship, delicate colouring and imagery? It is because within the freedom of his art he can shape and order entirely at his own will and choice. The actual world has no claim upon him. That is why some of his rhymes sound like nonsense, however facile or even inevitable they may be. His muse often arouses suspicion—it is altogether too facile, almost glib.

Significant, though, that of the poems—there is more than one—to hold our interest, the one to attain an almost extraordinary sense

THE POETRY OF GEORGE O'NEILL 411

of beauty and reality is the title poem. For in the *White Rooster* O'Neill fortunately is no longer occupied with the problem of form (the poem is in free verse), and for the first time steps before his readers. The result is as distinctly satisfying as it is something of a surprise—a fresh, incisive, almost passionate reaction. We would wish the poet to turn his attention more to “poesie intime,” that intensely modern poetry, as Pater has called it, in which the author is not afraid or ashamed to take the reader into his confidence, and portray his most personal moods.

MICHAEL FRAENKEL.

A PUBLIC SCHOOL-MASTER ON THE READING OF POETRY.

Poetry does not fully exist until it has been spoken aloud. It is not like a business letter, or a menu card, fully expressed upon paper; such meaner kinds of literature exist simply to give information, which may be assimilated as readily through the ear as through the eye.

. . . In poetry subject and form are inseparable. The poet's object is so to arouse the imagination of the reader that the reader may experience the emotions felt by the poet when he created his poem. He therefore expresses his meaning, not in simple prose phrases, but with the help of many devices—such as rhythm, melodious arrangement of vowels and consonants, rhyme, and the various figures of speech. And almost all of these devices depend upon the sound of what he writes. Poetry is articulate music. To read poetry silently is not to understand it, not even to know it; it is merely to find out what it is about, as if one were to read the title under a picture without bothering to look at the picture itself. To prefer to read silently such poetry as that of the sixteenth and seventeenth century lyric writers, of Shelley, or of Swinburne, is almost as illogical as to prefer reading the score of a symphony to hearing an orchestra perform it. There is really no reason why either poetry or music should be written down except to preserve it, and both existed and flourished long before there were any means of writing them down.

Every one knows, however, that a piece of music badly performed is, as the slang phrase has it, “murdered.” Its life is taken away; the reason of its existence is not revealed. Therefore, a lover of music is generally at some pains to study his music and perfect his technique, so as to be able to give life to the composer's creation; or, if he cannot do that, he will try to hear it performed by others

who have done so. Yet how many take similar pains about poetry ? It is not easy to play music even badly, but it is very easy to speak a poem badly, or even not to speak it at all, but to look at it and put it away as "read." To speak poetry well—not necessarily to recite it, but to read it aloud—is difficult, but it is well within the powers of anyone with normal gifts of intelligence, imagination and rhythm. It comes naturally, though to very few. . . .

Complete understanding of a poem will not make it intelligible to others if the voice is uncontrolled or inaudible. For this reason it is well to begin in a small room, and to insist throughout on entire audibility and correctness of diction. Varieties of interpretation and most valuable ideas are brought out by competition. And there is one golden rule for the reading of verse: Find out the rhythms, and let the metre take care of itself. The metre is the formal pattern on which the poem is constructed, but no poet with any mastery of his art uses it as more than a framework. English poetry is "scanned" by counting the metrical accents (not the syllables) in each line, and the groups of syllables thus formed are known as "feet"; but, so long as the number of feet in the line is preserved, not only may the position of the accents change, but there may be actually more or fewer accents in the line than the metrical pattern allows for. . . .

Coleridge defined poetry as "the best words in the best order," a definition that appears truer the more it is considered. In poetry a writer can make not only his meaning but his whole implication far clearer than in prose, because poetry preserves the intonations. . . .

The love of poetry grows out of the ability to observe subtleties such as those instanced above, and to speak the poems with full appreciation of their significance; this ability can be acquired only by diverting the attention from the printed word, and using every effort to make poetry the living force that it was in the mouth of the poet. Those who "do not care for poetry" are commonly those who, for one reason or another, have never got further with it than the nodding acquaintance obtained by reading it silently, swiftly, unimaginatively, and probably not more than once. Just as a very accomplished musician can read a full score and hear a full orchestra in his imagination, so it is possible to learn to "listen to" poetry as one reads it silently, and all lovers of poetry do so; but, although much delight can be got in this way by an imaginative reader, a very little experimenting will show how much is missed and what mistaken judgments can be made. Poetry does not fully exist until it has been not only spoken, but heard.

We have quoted rather fully from Mr. Geoffrey Crump's admirable introduction to *Poets of the Romantic Revival* (Harrap), because it deals with a subject that has always concerned us very closely, and we would like this sound restatement of the relation of reading to poetry to be taken seriously. It may seem a repetition, but we cannot insist too strongly upon its importance. In the body of his book Mr. Crump, himself a poet, whose *As the Leaves Fall* has deeply affected many minds, attempts to describe and illustrate the revival of the Romantic idea in English poetry between 1750 and 1830 by a careful study and analysis of the minds of the men of genius, notably Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley and Keats, to whom this idea was a creative inspiration, and of the poems in which it was most fully embodied. The book thus becomes a reasoned introduction to these poets, with an annotated anthology of their poetry. A similar motive and plan will be found responsible for the latest addition to the Cambridge Anthologies—*The Poetry of the Age of Wordsworth*, an anthology of the five major poets already named, with a comparative introduction by Prof. Dover Wilson, which very briefly indicates the social conditions, as well as the literary atmosphere, in which the judiciously selected masterpieces which follow were created—another useful service to the better understanding of the best in English poetry, embodied in books that are a delight to handle and read.

* * *

"The children of to-day have many advantages over those of a generation or so ago, and perhaps in nothing more than in what is presented to them as poetry," says Mr. A. Watson Bain in his preface to *A Poetry Book for Children* (Cambridge University Press, 2s. 6d.). This statement is justified by many volumes that have come to our notice lately and notably by two mentioned above, and it can be fitly applied to Mr. Bain's own charming collection, which, although it contains much that is comparatively new, is of all-round excellence and in good taste. It is a rare and sincere compliment for us to say that in its hundred exquisitely printed pages we find nothing we would wish away—nothing that is morbid, trivial or false in sentiment. It should compete effectively with other less discriminating collections which have obtained too wide a vogue. The majority of the poems in Mr. Bain's collection are not intentionally written for children—it includes very few examples outside three pieces by Rose Fyleman, of the cultivated deliberate child's verse which is a feature of modern publishing. Two charming examples of this genre have been published this month by Collins,

Come Christmas, by Eleanor Farjeon, poems in a variety of moods and manners, grave and gay, precise and whimsical, dealing with Christmas customs and lore. The little carol section is particularly exquisite, embodying the spirit of both old and new styles of Christmas songs. In the making of an anthology it would be difficult to decide which type of poem to draw upon, here we quote one of the more serious pieces.

SHALL I TO THE BYRE GO DOWN ?

*Shall I to the byre go down
Where the stalled oxen are ?
Or shall I climb the mountain's crown
To see the rising star ?
Or shall I walk the golden floor
Where the King's feast is spread ?
Or shall I seek the poor man's door
And ask to break his bread ?*

*It matters not. Go where you will,
Kneel down in cattle stall,
Climb up the cold and starlit hill,
Enter in hut or hall,
To the warm fireside give your cheek,
Or turn it to the snow,
It matters not ; the One you seek
You'll find where'er you go.*

*His sandal-sole is on the earth,
His head in the sky,
His voice is in the baby's mirth
And in the old man's sigh,
His shadow falls across the sea,
His breath is in the wind,
His tears with all who grieve left He,
His heart with all who sinned.*

*Whether you share the poor man's mite
Or taste the king's own fare,
He whom you go to seek to-night
Will meet you everywhere ;
For He is where the cattle wend,
And where the planets shine—
Lo, He is in your eyes ! Oh friend,
Stand still, and look in mine.*

The other book of distinguished children's verse is Miss Elizabeth Fleming's *Gammon and Spinach* (5s.), delightfully whimsical lyrics in the R.L.S. vein, tersely described by Miss Fleming herself :

The gammon and spinach that's in this book
Is not the kind you expect to cook,
Gammon is castles and queens and kings,
Giants and knights and adventurings,
Hillocks where grasses are soft green smoke
Coming from chimneys of tiny folk,
And oceans, where every turning tide
Holds foaming horses to mount and ride.

Spinach is starlight, light of the moon,
Stories, journeys, a silver spoon,
Dancing dust on a summer's day,
And people near when they're far away—
And anything else that you can't explain
Is gammon and spinach over again.

Here is a typical poem as a taste of the quality of Miss Fleming's work, and as evidence in support of the above definitions :

WHO KNOWS ?

*There's magic in the earth and air,
There's magic in a hill and tree,
The very briar climbing there
May hide a Princess passing fair,
A Princess sleeping quietly.*

*And those twelve swans that soar so high
Above our smoky, noisy towns—
Who knows the land from which they fly,
Or that there sweep across the sky
Twelve shining kings with golden crowns ?*

*Here on my little window-sill
Are beans from last year's harvest-time ;
Maybe, of all the rows I fill,
One bean may grow up, up until
It has a stalk that Jack could climb.*

*The sooty cat with crocus eyes,
That purrs a drowsy, happy tune,*

*Is very old and very wise,
A witch's cat that sits and flies
Behind its mistress to the moon.*

*And see yon passing gipsy show,
Whose pans and dishes chink and chime,
Dogs, foals, and goats behind it go—
Disguised, disguised! Ah, fallen low
Are Kings of Once Upon a Time!*

SOME COLLECTED EDITIONS.

Several poets have appeared in collected editions this autumn. What is thought of Mr. Robert Graves in this form will be found on another page. Mr. G. K. Chesterton has not attained this dignity so prematurely or rashly (Cecil Palmer, 10s. 6d.). What we think of Mr. Chesterton has been expressed on many pages of this REVIEW over many years and to apprise him further within the limits of a short notice would be a slight to a great mind, a paladin among pygmies. These *Collected Poems* contain some new poems, chiefly comments in verse on current events which we read eagerly and with due gusto but from which we miss the arresting distinctiveness, the inevitable yet surprising boldness and beauty of phrase, the sustained vigour and vision that characterised the earlier poems, the "Ballad of the White Horse" and "The Wild Knight." In some ways, the *Collected Poems* will obscure Mr. Chesterton's reputation and reduce his stature. The sparkling ephemera cast shadows on the brilliant flame of his pure poetry. And we would like to see him more cleanly and attractively printed than in the volume before us.

It is the selected rather than the collected *Poems of William Canton* that come to us in neat and appropriate format from Messrs. George Harrap and Co. (5s.). Mr. Canton is better known for his interpretations of childhood—his poems about children have been properly praised as the best of the kind that we have in English (see POETRY REVIEW articles on this fascinating subject by Mr. I. S. Wood, of *Golden Treasury* fame, and Mrs. Alston), but his greater claim to our attention rests on poems that do not come within this category, and we should be grateful for his poems of high seriousness and beauty as a relief from verse with little content and no depth and often shorn of ornament. Mr. Canton was among the first to see in science a new ground that might be made to yield fresh inspiration to poetry. Almost 50 years ago his "Through the Ages" received immediate recognition as an entirely new departure in poetical themes and secured for him the warm admiration of Huxley and Max Muller,

the latter of whom regarded his poems on scientific and classical subjects as equal to Matthew Arnold's work. To those who with Walter Pater "greatly relish an intellectual cast in poetry" united to real melody and hang of expression, they will give keen pleasure and an occasional surprise, such as the finding of what may be taken as the anticipatory nucleus in form and manner and occasionally in content of "The Hound of Heaven" in a chorus in "Comfort on Pelion":

Grasp my hand !

Hold me fast !

For I stagger and reel

At the tumult and splendour of life rushing past

In a whirlwind of fire, dust, vapour and thunder :

For above me and under,

Upon this side and that, all the sea and the land,

All the skies and the gods' starry seats in the skies,

Spin and spin on the axle of time like a wheel.

* * *

I see half the round, and I search the dim distance

To find the beginning—

The point where the vague subtile thought, non-existence,

Is changed to the forms and the colours of being,

The great wheel goes spinning,

And baffles the brain

As it sweeps without pause through the awful, inane,

Inscrutable tracts of the vast uncreated,

Then bursts into sight

Inconceivably freighted

With pageants of substance and colour and motion.

* * *

. . . as I gaze, all the substance of life

With itself is at strife,

And for ever is fleeing,

And for ever pursued from disguise to disguise,

Still eludes and recoils, still survives and escapes

In the masks of divine, inexhaustible shapes—

Now a goddess's tear, now a pearl in the ocean,

Now a bird, now a worm, now a flower, now a flame—

An unknowable essence, incessantly ranging

Through dædal surprises, unchangeably changing,

Yet single and permanent, effluent.

Refluent.

Ever and ever the same.

Mr. Alfred Noyes reached the "collected" form several years ago. Of the first three volumes, published at intervals, about two hundred thousand copies have been sold—a concrete instance of the survival of poetic taste and substantial bookbuying that causes neo-georgians with their slim hundreds to say bitter things. This autumn has brought the fourth volume from Messrs. Blackwood (300 pp., 7s. 6d.). The nobility and rapture of the earlier Noyes, with the skilful mastery and range of rhythms, which are almost too facile, sometimes leading us to lose sight of the artist in our admiration of the craftsman, are found again in *The Isle of Memories*, and *Hills of Youth and Mountain Laurel*, and many other poems that send us lilting on our way. Others there are in a newer manner that leaves us unsatisfied,—they seem to trail off into obscurity that is not profundity. And although we understand and appreciate their spirit, we would like to have the ephemeral polemics cut out. Mr. Noyes is tempted to wander into alien fields, to listen to false friends who will betray him. The author of the exquisite lyric *Sero Te Amavi* has no need to barter his birthright.

We may regard *A Laurence Binyon Anthology* (Collins, 6s.) as a reduced collected edition. This kind of volume generally is vicariously compiled by an assiduous bookmaker who believes he is justified in representing what he considers to be the best examples of his author's work. Mr. Binyon has made his own selection, and gives us such a volume as we have been asked for frequently since an appreciation of his genius was printed in the POETRY REVIEW apropos of the publication of his latest volume, *The Sirens* (Macmillan), in 1925. We get poems from *London Visions* which established Mr. Binyon's reputation as one of the more serious and considerable of contemporary poets, and the *Poems of England and the War*, which enlarged and confirmed it and constitute perhaps the most permanent poetry produced by the war. The austere, poignant *For the Fallen* has become a classic, unrivalled by anything of a similar nature in the Greek Anthology. In addition to some splendid odes we get selections from narrative poems and dramas which lack the life, colour and eloquence of the poetic dramas of Mr. Binyon's derided cousin, Mr. Stephen Phillips. The austere gravity that has set its mark on all Mr. Binyon's work naturally pervades this volume, which is characteristic of the man. If he were less reticent and reserved he might have been the Oxford Professor of Poetry or the grave corrector of license in modern verse.

Poems of a South African, the collected verse of Arthur Vine Hall (Longmans, 7s. 6d.), conveys adroitly, yet simply, the colour and atmosphere of an exotic country and people. In his longer poems, *A Voyage to the Cape*, *Table Mountain*, *My Boer Host*, *Round the Camp Fire*, full of apt description and character drawing, the central theme and burden is the proof that "We all are one in love to thee, South Africa our Home." Herein lies the appeal of Mr. Vine Hall's poems to the homeland. But perhaps the most distinctively South African flavour will be found in some of the shorter pieces "for boys and girls," of which *Singsingetjie*—the Dutch name for the cicada—from which we quote, is an example:—

Sing, Singsingetjie, sing, sing, sing,
Sing the song of the sun!
On high where the blue and the pine-tops meet;
Sing, sing, sing in the fragrant heat;
While the golden hammers of noontide beat
On shimmering veld and dusty street—
Sing, singsingetjie, sing.
Sing, singsingetjie, sing, sing, sing.
Sing the song of the sun.

After the long years underground,
With the cold damp darkness all around.
Sing the song of the sunlight found;
Sing till the krantzes and kloofs resound—
Sing, Singsingetjie, sing.

* * *

Another collected edition is that embracing *The Poems of Duncan Campbell Scott* (Dent, 12s. 6d.), to whose vigour and tenderness we drew attention in a notable pre-war article on *Canadian Poets*. Mr. Scott is now introduced by Mr. John Masfield, who recognises in this handsome volume of about two hundred poems, many of them of considerable length, "of different moods, qualities and powers, . . . a wide range of technical skill, of subject and of sensitiveness." Mr. Masfield continues, "Generally speaking, like most of the poets of the New World, Mr. Scott uses the verse forms of Europe, but in all his most distinctive work his subjects are Canadian." To these rather obvious statements we may add that Mr. Scott writes in English. What is more important is that he is distinctly Canadian in outlook and feeling; he knows at first-hand the savage and pioneer life of the Dominion, which he describes without idealisation in vivid narrative poems, graphic descriptive work and

stark ballads. When he touches Europe it is to deal poignantly with *Somewhere in France*, and to offer comfort and pride in noble stanzas *To the Canadian Mothers*. Mr. Masfield confesses that his favourite poem in this book is *The Piper of Arll*, which "was the first poem of romantic fantasy ever read by me and I love it still as I did then. . . . It has perhaps given me pleasure more frequently than any poem." We find *The Piper* itself is a poem, an imaginative ballad that evokes an atmosphere and is as fresh as the prairie wind.

SOME INDIVIDUAL VOLUMES.

Mr. Langford Reed, the anthologist of limericks and nonsense verse and biographer of nonsense poets, has now published a collection of his own nonsense ballads, *Sausages and Sundials* (Jarrolds, 7s. 6d.), a clever medley of the inane and hilarious, with a dash of grotesque parody and broad satire giving pep to the sheer absurdities, and a strong flavouring of puns that Tom Hood would have envied. One of his most reasonable ebullitions deals with the problems raised in the mind of a bewildered little girl by angels being always pictured as clean shaven. Do they visit a heavenly barber and where do the whiskered hairy-faced gentlemen go?

"My darling, what singular notions you've got;
The questions you raise puzzle Mummy a lot.
I really don't know whether barbers or not
Are known in our Heavenly Haven;
But this I am sure, after passing the grave,
Men cannot be angels, how hard they may crave,
Except by the narrowest possible shave,
And that's why they're pictured clean-shaven!"

It is a pleasurable thing to read Mr. Humbert Wolfe's Translations from the Greek Anthology, *Others Abide* (Ernest Benn, 6s.), so successfully has he kept the combined piquant and poignant qualities of the original verses. His qualities as an original poet are evident in these versions. The lines chosen to illustrate the writer's skill are a dedicatory poem by Macedonius and an anonymous couplet:—

*This dog, this pouch, this spear I dedicate,
Pan and the Dryads. But I deem it just
If I take back the dog to share my fate
A friend who will not scorn my humble crust.*

*You watch the stars. I'd watch, were I the skies,
My love with gold and multitudinous eyes.*

Mr. H. A. Dalziel also translates from the Classics (*The Tower*, Blackwell, 4s. 6d.), accurately perhaps, but not always successfully. Though there is considerable merit in these verses and in those of his own creating, yet their thought is apt to become congested. This is chiefly due to the sudden changes of construction and to an over-economy in words.

Two other volumes, *Star Flowers*, by Daisy Matthews (Blount), and *The Angel in the Garden*, by Mary Winter Were (Bagster, 3s. 6d.), on the other hand, suffer from an under-economy in words. The diction of the former is fluent but stereotyped and that of the latter too facile for the charm of the Legends and Slumber Songs contained in one section of the book.

In *The Broken Hearth-stone and Other Poems*, by Margaret Cropper (Allan, 2s. 6d.), the title poem is sensitively written, and though there is delicacy of feeling in these lines from another poem called *What is it to Choose Peace?* :—

*It is to choose that the strong swordsman's hand
Shall be nailed fast, powerless, to withstand,
That the swift feet transpierced shall not move,
That there shall be no weapon left but Love ;*

yet their effectiveness is blurred by the conversational tone of many of the other verses. A conversational tone is perhaps more excusable in a narrative poem like *The Sisters*, by F. O. Mann (Hogarth Press, 4s. 6d.), but when it is unrelieved by any attempt at lyricism or imagery the result is certainly not poetry, even though the verse rhymes and scans. Mr. Mann can tell a story, however, and if his art selected morbid material less exclusively his characters would become convincing.

The authors and compilers of *Bedaes Poetry* are to be congratulated upon the high standard of the verse that the book contains. It is edited and published by Mr. Geoffrey Crump and is as promising an anthology of verse by young people as one could wish to see. The poems are written by scholars at Bedales School whose ages range from eight to eighteen years. I think that readers will agree that there is both maturity and spontaneity of thought in these lines from *Time*, by Lucretia Makower (16) :—

*Why have so many people railed at Time,
And symbolised it as an old grey man
Carrying a gleaming scythe, and cutting down
The proud tall scarlet poppies as they bloom ?
Men cry to God to stay Time's hand, to make*

*Time lifeless, leave the world unchanged. Oh fools !
 What of to-morrow's flowers, folded now ? . . .
 As a sculptor with a single piece of clay
 Breaks what he's made, remodels, and then breaks
 To near perfection, so does Time with life ;
 He kills that better things may live. Sometime
 He'll model from this life perfection. . Then
 Time, the Great Sculptor, God, will cease to be.*

I am convinced that I shall come across the names of some of these young authors again in the near future even if it is only in the Young People's Verse Section of THE POETRY REVIEW.

Much superfluous bookmaking is being done, but Mr. Eric Partridge, who is devoting himself to eighteenth century poetry, has done a commendable service in giving a selection of the poems of *The Three Wartons* (Scholaris Press, 7s. 6d. net), in a beautiful type, cleanly printed—not great poets yet men closely identified with the study and development of English poetry. Thomas, the father, has not been printed since his son Joseph issued his *Poems on Several Occasions* two years after his death in 1745—tendentious lyricism that anticipated and influenced his sons and Gray and Smart, and though he wrote, in the manner from which he was showing a way of escape, such lines as “While mourning vegetables please the eye,” he was a pioneer of literary romanticism, just as his son Joseph became “the first consciously romantic of the eighteenth century.” Sir E. Gosse has said that Joseph's most significant poem, *The Enthusiast*, is the earliest expression of complete revolt against the classical attitude . . . the essence of romantic hysteria. His brother, Thomas the Younger, the slovenly, ease-loving, is the greatest influence of the three Wartons. He scored by mature work as a poet when in his teens, and was professor of Poetry at Oxford when 26 and thereafter a critic and director of poetical studies whose work still concerns us and a sonneteer whom Coleridge regarded as “masterly.” His *Grave of King Arthur* has been overlooked as an eager, picturesque, swiftly-moving poem that anticipated later work. Mr. Partridge, who has done a desirable literary service in a graceful manner, provides a bibliography, in itself a useful chapter in English studies, but omits an index to the poems he has made accessible to this generation.

In the Pit-Head Poems of Frederick C. Boden (Dent, 3s.), we find little to justify the assertion made by Sir A. Quiller-Couch in the preface that this young miner “sings, fiercely demanding air and light,” nor do we trace “the definite philosophical or ethical purpose”

which Mr. G. N. Pocock says there is in most of these remarkable lyrics, which remind us of *The Shropshire Lad* but without suggesting imitativeness. Now 24, this young singer began to work down the pit at Chesterfield, which lately produced another extraordinary pitman-poet in the late J. W. Streets, at 13, but for the last six years he has been a night worker on the surface. During this time, Mr. Pocock tells us, he has never ceased to educate himself in poetry and philosophy in his scant spare time, spending whatever money he can afford on books of poems and philosophical works, and while not consciously composing his poems when working at the pit-head, he feels poetry subconsciously, he says, at all times and places. *Autumn Thoughts* is not one of his stronger pieces but it gives some idea of his manner and individuality :—

*Now down along each summer lane
The wintry winds begin to blow,
And trees will soon stand bare again
And summer lanes be wrapt in snow.*

*And in the lodging where I bide
The folk will sit the evenings thro'
Snuffling by the bright fireside
Of things the neighbours say and do.*

*But there I have a little room
Where I may flee from such poor fare,
And tho' no fire will light the gloom
Yet I have all the singers there.*

*They stand together, row on row,
The men that sang for singing's sake,
And I shall sit by candle-glow
And strive to mend the verse I make.*

*And tho' along each frosty lane
The leaves are scattered far and wide,
Yet spring will soon be here again
And I shall walk the countryside.*

Mr. W. K. Seymour's *Parrot Pie*—forty-five parodies and imitations of contemporaries—(Harrap, 6s.) is the best and most spirited work of this kind we have had for years. He is much more than a clever imitator, however adroitly he hits off the mannerisms of his

subjects ; very often he indulges in parallels rather than parodies—witty, cynical, jovial, but never harsh or jejune. We quote, because of its brevity, *In the Golden Ways*, after Mr. Robert Bridges—from his *Later Poems*—it might also be—after Mr. W. H. Davies—

*In the golden ways
Summer in silence wanders ;
The wasps utter their praise,
A full cow ponders.*

*An ass munches a flower,
A white cloud hovers ;
Behold your perfect hour,
Ye happy lovers !*

Dr. W. Winslow Hall, whose metrical skill has been exercised in many books, has published a collection of *Corfe Castle Ballads* (1s. net), which are an effective poetical memorial to the “grim gravestones of dead force” that still dominate, though in gentler fashion than of yore, the sleepy Isle of Purbeck. Mr. Hall’s vigorous ballads, ranging from the tragedy of Elfrida (979) to the stout defence against the fierce four months’ siege by the Roundheads, are much superior to the average local and commemorative verse—as one would expect from a master of prosody, inspired by local lore, to which, in return, the gifted author has done really distinguished service.

The Dowager Countess of Jersey and the Hon. Emily Ward have published an unusually effective and dramatic play in blank verse—*Hannibal’s Tribunal* (Stockwell)—based on the tradition that when Hannibal crossed the Pyrenees and the chiefs of the Gaulish tribes made terms with him against Rome, he listened sympathetically to the latter’s complaints against some of his Carthaginian soldiery, and promised that further cases of misconduct should be tried by a court composed of the wives of the Gauls. Here is a situation with great possibilities. Occasion arises for such a court to be constituted, and the president, wife of a chief of Southern Gaul, sees in it the beginning of a new era—

*Our memories must treasure this occasion !
We sit to-day as woman judging man.
And man—impetuous, uncouth and stubborn—
Must yield to woman’s clearer understanding ;
To-day man stands his trial and accepts
A woman’s judgment as the final word.*

The kernel of the drama, apart from its historic interest, is the love-story of Gwenda, the sister of this determined Dame-President, and Himilco, Hannibal's officer.

The most arresting contribution to the literature of the Blake Centenary is surely Mr. Jack Lindsay's constructive attempt to estimate the poetic forces which Blake released (Fanfrolico Press, 3s. 6d.). Blake is both acclaimed and attacked from within. Mr. Lindsay accepts Blake's scale of spiritual values as real and proceeds to make a poet's analysis of Blake's poetic creativeness. It is a highly psychological, metaphysical treatise, presenting many difficulties to an ordinary mind, and further examination of it must be left to a more profound student of Blake, who at the moment is prevented by illness from grappling with Mr. Lindsay's provocative and complex virtuosity.

In *Lifted Torches* (Erskine Macdonald, 5s.), Miss Evelyn M. Watson again displays the versatility and fervent ecstasy of her muse. She is possessed by a high seriousness to which she must give expression; she is a universal lover, nothing is alien to her quick sympathy, her intense discernment of spiritual and physical qualities. She has found a public in America; she deserves to be more widely read in the old country. *Threads*, by Dorothy Quick, who was a protégée of Mark Twain, is in lighter vein. Miss Quick writes up to her name—eager, alert, shrewd, and weaves verses of many patterns and colours. Mr. Vinal, who publishes her in New York, reports she has captured a large public with her skilful weaving of sentiment, gaiety and cynicism.

The most notable anthology of the autumn, because of its subject and range and the amount of real poetry contained therein, is the Celtic collection brought together by Mrs. Grace Rhys (Harrap, 7s. 6d.), who contributes a sympathetic and individual introduction of great charm and beauty. It follows that the collection is more composite, complete and thorough than customary, and our admiration is not lessened by realising that *The Poem Book of the Gael* is more strictly representative, that a number of the poems, especially in the Scottish section—each division of the British Celts, Welsh, Irish, Scotch, is represented by about one hundred pieces—are scarcely Celtic in authorship or content, and that in spite of her wide range Mrs. Rhys is almost conventional in her selections and omits many writers—as is perhaps inevitable—who might fittingly have had a place among truly Celtic poets. The very definite Celtic influence discernible in the Scottish renaissance—something very distinct from the Irish mist and moonshine verse—is not adequately

represented; we miss—to mention but three of several—Miss Angus, Mr. John Buchan, and Miss Violet Jacob, and *Welsh Poets* could have provided some distinctive examples within the scope of this Celtic anthology. But all this by the way. We need an adept to do justice to this collection by using it to indicate what does constitute the essence and glamour of Celtic poetry.

Among the anthologies of the autumn must be included the comprehensive collection of poems, chiefly original, by above three hundred different contributors, on the cities of the world, ranging from Aberdeen to Rio, from Calgary to Tokio, chiefly succinct sonnets that describe, after the manner of a bold etching, the salient features and characteristics of the varied capitals and lesser towns (Erskine Macdonald, 7s. 6d.). The editor, Mrs. Bartlett, contributes an elaborate and exhaustive introduction on cities in poetry and the poetry of cities, which she illustrates from all manner of poets, from Homer to Sacheverell Sitwell, the whole forming something different from all other anthologies.

One of the most popular gift books of the season will be the new and cheaper edition of Lady Birkett's anthology of the chase, *Hunting Lays and Hunting Ways* (The Bodley Head, 6s.). The same appeal that made Mr. Masfield's *Reynard the Fox* independent of the avowed poetry readers and caused it to be read and discussed at covert sides, will carry this excellent selection of good things in verse and (occasionally) prose on hunting beyond the narrow confines of the bookish. Is it ominous that not many contemporaries are represented, and that Whyte Melville and Jorrock remain unsurpassed?

We welcome a re-issue in *The World's Classics* (cloth 2s.), of Mr. T. W. H. Crosland's selection of English Songs and Ballads, first included in this handy series in 1902, with some additions—above 300 familiar pieces, providing in compact form the best material for many delightful ballad-reading evenings.

SCOTS POETRY AND NEW POETS.

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

SIR,—There is no royal road to poetry. Each poet must be allowed to make his approach to Parnassus in his own way and in his own time. But there is one ultimate test of the value of any poet. Does he surprise us with a fineness of phrase which makes us feel the inspiration he has felt—the phrase which stamps him as an undoubted maker? I feel that both Mr. Spence and Miss

Angus, in their best work, do this. Both of them have accomplished something which has raised the level of Scottish poetry in our age.

Scottish poetry is just emerging from a phase of weak traditionalism, and that is why you in England have heard so little about it. In the future, I am sure, you are destined to hear more. But both Miss Angus and Mr. Spence have done their work in their own way. The quotations which you gave from Mr. Spence's poetry were not the quotations which I personally would have made, but they were no doubt quotations which would appeal to English readers. If the parallel with Drummond of Hawthornden were to be pursued—and it is a parallel which I have made myself elsewhere—then it would be possible to quote many fine things by Mr. Spence, characterised, just as Drummond's poetry is, by the same lofty diction and courtly atmosphere. Mr. Spence, in his later work, has been inspired by the Auld Makars, by Scottish poets like Dunbar and Lindsay, and has sometimes written deliberately with the intention of showing what Scottish poetry has lost in deserting this tradition for the rustic and the sentimental. This has perhaps been a source of much misunderstanding, for when a poet refines he is apt to lay himself open to the charge of lack of feeling.

By the time this letter appears there will have appeared also another volume by Miss Angus. I think it will be found to endorse Mrs. Robertson Cameron's tribute, for in *Sun and Candlelight* Miss Angus has restored another virtue to Scottish poetry which, in the more recent past, it has lacked—the feeling of glamour, wedded to haunting cadences, which is the boast of the best Scottish balladry.—Yours faithfully,

Edinburgh.

CHARLES GRAVES.

IN DEFENCE OF FRANCIS THOMPSON.

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—May I be allowed to say a few words of protest to the author of *The Function of Poetry*, who finds Francis Thompson's *The Hound of Heaven* "intolerable." First of all, a poem that sums up, in some thirteen beautifully chosen words the average Christian's attitude to religion like this :

"Yet was I sore adread,
Lest, having Him, I should have naught beside"—

is surely valuable as a means of provoking thought even if it were not—as it undoubtedly is—really great poetry as well.

The dread that man cannot win to God without suffering :

“ Ah, must thou char the wood ere
Thou cans't limn with it ? ”

is a sincere and poignant cry from the newly awakened soul of a Christian.

Then that triumphantly exultant and supremely comforting climax :

“ Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,
I am He Whom thou seekest !
Thou dravest love from thee, thou dravest Me.”

Is that intolerable, Mr. Casson ? . . . The beauty of it *is* almost intolerable, certainly.

What we know of the life of Francis Thompson teaches us that he did not have to “ransack some unknown Catholic glossary “to clothe his burning vision of Christ and man in appropriate language.

M. K. MACKILLOP BROWN.

SOUTHAMPTON.

[Mr. Casson referred to the manner and not the matter of Francis Thompson's famous poem. He considers the poetical technique “intolerable.” To him modern “poetic diction” is a crying evil of contemporary poetry, and he claims we are in need of a return to the narrative style and simple diction.—ED.]

Messrs. Faber and Gwyer are issuing a series of four-page booklets in gay and grotesque wrappers, each containing a single previously unpublished poem by modern masters of verse, including Thomas Hardy, L. Binyon, G. K. Chesterton and W. W. Gibson. These little Ariel Poems, which are associated in subject with Christmas, may be regarded not only as a literary substitute for the conventional card without intrinsic value, but also as miniature first editions.

Mr. Washington van Dusen, who is associated with The Poetry Society through its Pittsburgh Chapter, has been elected president of the Browning Club of Philadelphia. He is a contributor to the City Anthology, and recently gained our Pittsburgh Chapter's poetry prize.

Bound copies of this and preceding volumes of THE POETRY REVIEW are obtainable from the Poetry Society's offices.

LORD COLERIDGE AND MR. LEWIS HIND.

SINCE the last issue of this journal of The Poetry Society we have lost by death several notable members, including Lord Coleridge, a former President of the Society, and Mr. Lewis Hind. Lord Coleridge presided at the remarkable Poets' Descendants' Dinner promoted by the Society in April 1910. Himself a descendant of Samuel Taylor Coleridge (who was more directly represented by his grandson, Mr. Ernest Hartley Coleridge), he proposed the toast of "The Immortal Memories of the British Poets" in a speech that was coloured by the Coleridge eloquence and glamour. As many present members were not then attached to the Society, it is perhaps desirable in this reference to our ex-President that we reprint the report of this speech which did honour to a notable occasion, the distinguished Chairman and the youthful Society.

OUR PRE-EMINENCE IN POETRY.

It was, Lord Coleridge thought, a happy idea which occurred to the authorities of that Society to bid them assemble that night in pious memory of the great poets from whom they claimed descent, or with whom they at any rate claimed kinship. He did not know whether the Heralds' College had investigated all their pedigrees—(laughter)—and he was not quite sure that if the poets themselves were there they would enjoy so harmonious an evening as they were enjoying. (Laughter.) He was not quite sure whether they were there to testify to the soundness of the hereditary principle—(laughter)—or the reverse. (Renewed laughter.) Of course, it might be that they were all of them poets either actually or potentially, and illustrating the saying that *poeta nascitur non fit*. Or it might be that they were sitting ranged round those tables waiting, like the Scholar Gipsy, for the spark from Heaven to fall. He could wish indeed that, as with Halley's Comet, there was a periodicity, and that at stated intervals the divine afflatus visited the descendants of the poets. (Hear, hear.) If, in the case of any of his hearers, that long periodic time had at last run out, and the poetic star had again mounted into the heavens, let not modesty in him or her prevent the company from sharing in that inspiration. (Laughter.)

This was said to be a material age. But it was a sentiment—a pure sentiment—that had brought them all together that night. (Hear, hear.) And truly while we were said to be a nation proud of our deeds rather than our words—and truly we were proud of the great men of action that our race had produced—still we might claim to surpass all other nations there were left upon the habitable globe as a nation of great poets. (Cheers.) Wonderful, truly wonderful, was the output of our poetry from Chaucer right down to our present

day. Here we were, the inhabitants of quite a small country, living in a foggy air, given over to industrial pursuits, dubbed, as we had been dubbed, a nation of shopkeepers, and yet no country—not Greece, not Palestine, not Rome, no European country, not America—could vie with us in the wealth, the continuity, or the variety of our poetic thought. (Cheers). He could not even conjecture an explanation. It might lie in the inspiration that we had received from our struggles for liberty and order ; it might lie in the variety, the flexibility, the music of our mother tongue ; it might lie in something that defined analysis—an undefinable inspiration that seemed to breathe upon our land. It was all unaccountable, but it was not to be gainsaid.

What would these islands be without the poets, for above all things it was they who had consecrated the land to us ? They had ennobled, they had beautified, they had transfigured the sights and sounds of Nature. The winter frost, the spring, with its flowers, the high midsummer pomp, autumn, with its mists and mellow fruitfulness, sunrise, sunset, the moon throwing her silver mantle o'er the dark, the galaxy of the stars, the mountain, the lake, the river, the sea, the melody of the birds, the plough driven along the furrows, the sower, the reaper, the churchyard at eventide, the thunder and the rainbow, the wind and the rain—what would they be to us without the poets ? (Cheers.) Who was there so stockish as not to find those sights and sounds more eloquent to him from a study and a reading of our singers.

And let them turn from Nature to human life. Of the greatest poet of all time, of him who held the mirror up to Nature, it was said of old that though his line of life would soon about, the lifetime of his like would never out. On the royal stage of Shakespeare all the great figures of history passed before our eyes. Greece, Rome, Italy, Scotland, England—on all he cast what had been rightly called his indolent and kingly gaze. He took mankind from the cradle to the grave, confiding in us the passion of Juliet, the ambition of Macbeth, the palsied will of Hamlet, the jealousy of Othello, the pathetic and retributive end of Lear. He brought us into the forest and set us down under the greenwood tree ; or again, he took us into the gossamer world of fairyland ; and finally, with Prospero as his spokesman, he bade us all be cheerful and think of all things well. And with this sweet and wholesome parting our great poet closed his book and his message to mankind.

Many of the poets died neglected and forlorn, but that night they could tell them that their words still lived. We were grateful to

LORD COLERIDGE & THE POETRY SOCIETY 431

them as to enchanters who, in a moment, could dissolve us into ecstasies and bring all heaven before our eyes. But whether we were in joy or in sorrow, whether we were in sickness, or in health, in youth, in manhood, or in old age, we told them that they had left us a rich storehouse to the glory of the Creator and the relief of man's estate. (Cheers).

THE APPEAL OF THE POETRY SOCIETY.

As President of the Society Lord Coleridge took a deep, personal interest in its development and was much concerned for its effective administration and welfare. He published an open letter which was very widely circulated through the leading newspapers and as a holograph letter. We reprint it below as its appeal is as pertinent to-day as when it was written seventeen years ago :

Sir,—This Society has been founded to nourish the love of Poetry in the heart of man.

In a material age there is need to keep alive the imaginative side of human life.

The object of those who have started the Society will be attained in proportion to the public support which it receives.

At present contribution to the ordinary membership has been fixed as low as ten shillings a year in the hope that support may come from every class. But it is obvious that not much active work can be done unless the membership attains to great numbers.

To supplement this, another class of membership at one guinea per year, and life membership at ten guineas, are offered to those who are in sympathy with the cause, and whose means may enable them to assist.

At present all the work is done by the officers of the Society without fee or reward, for which the Society is grateful. Already we have encouragement from the Colonies, and local gatherings have been held and are in contemplation to bring together the lovers of Poetry by recitals, by discussion and in other ways to stimulate the love of the Poets, and to spread far and wide their message to man.

Information may be had from the Secretary, and subscriptions and donations may be sent to the Treasurer at Malory House, Featherstone Buildings, W.C.1.

COLERIDGE, President.

The death of Mr. Lewis Hind came as a great shock to the many associated with him. He was connected with the Society almost from its foundation, and made his first public appearance on its

behalf at the Christmas Party organised at the Hotel Cecil by the Baroness de Bertouch in 1910, when he told the stories of various Fairy Tales and Poems illustrated on the screen. His more recent appearance at the Savoy Chapel will be remembered by present members, especially the occasions on which he spoke with deep feeling and fervency of his personal associations with Francis Thompson and Mrs. Meynell and read poems that moved him strangely.

This much-loved Editor of *The Academy* which crowned Stephen Phillips was a rare type among editors and critics, with a strongly developed human vein and a kindliness and consideration, combined with exceptional charm of manner and speech that endeared him to all who had the privilege of being associated with him. An appropriate tribute to his memory would be the endowment of an annual Poetry Crown or Wreath to be awarded on similar lines to those adopted by *The Academy* under Mr. Hind's editorship.

* * *

We have to record, too, the death of Mr. Noel Wills, who was one of the early members of the Council of the Poetry Society when he was engaged in the brave but hopeless effort of publishing an independent poetry magazine. When *The Thrush* ceased he retired into the country. Writing of his sudden and unexpected death, Sir Alfred Fripp in *The Times* described Mr. Wills as "one of those great men whose service and value to the community are apt to be overlooked till the place they made by the exercise of the power that was entrusted to them is left empty. . . . Not Gloucestershire only, but England and the Empire are the poorer, for in these days of rush and push the type is rare 'of toil unsever'd from tranquillity; of labour that in lasting fruit outgrows far noisier schemes, accomplished in repose.' . . . Noel Wills was not only a patron of letters and the brush, but was no mean performer himself with both. Of a thoughtful, retiring, gentle disposition, he was singularly well informed. . . . None could meet him without feeling the better for it, without feeling that breath of the spirit which emanates from all delicate understanding, sympathetic natures. . . . Noel Wills was possessed of a high idealism and vision. . . . He is 'dead ere his prime.' "

* * *

Mrs. Marie Tello Phillips, president of our Pittsburgh Chapter, who has added the presidency of the newly incorporated Bookfellows' Library Guild, has had her first novel, *Stella Marvin*, published by Harold Vinal, Ltd., New York.

THE POET'S FELLOWSHIP.

THE PREMIUM EDITOR'S REPORT.

It is gratifying to find that, in spite of a misprint with regard to the closing date (we hope it was obvious to the majority of readers), the number of MSS. submitted to the Premium Editor has increased and also more contributors are claiming editorial opinion and criticism. This widely appreciated service is capable of still greater expansion. To the Fellowship, which is a very real thing, although we may seldom meet corporeally, we welcome several new comers whose work justifies their admission and unites them in spirit with the old frequenters of our Mermaid Tavern—the largest gathering of serious workers in poetry brought into communion of feeling, aspiration and expression.

A feature of the MSS. this month is the subordination of the subjective poems to the objective, depicting familiar scenes and objects with peculiar restraint and concentration and achieving an effect of atmosphere and colour. The most successful in this respect and who are in consequence highly commended are :

A. E. Mackay, Chelsea ; G. W. Eustace, Arundel ; Mrs. Eve, Weybridge ; Esther Samms, Luton ; G. Fauvel, Knebworth ; K. M. Boothroyd, St. Andrews ; Isabel Kemsley, Rochester ; John Cook, Edinburgh ; A. D. L. Wilson, Bedford ; Joyce Harrison, Lincoln.

The work of the following scarcely comes within this category—it comes more within another group of poems that try to express and define the wonders and elusiveness of beauty or have forsaken modernity for classical themes and images—but they deserve to be placed on the honours list :

J. Boynton Green, San Bernardino ; E. Alden, Haddenham ; F. Kemp, Catford ; J. W. Nance, Bromborough ; Noel Allport, Polesworth ; Audrey Bell, Broadstairs.

Commendable poems that fall roughly within one or the other category are submitted by : E. B. King, Indianapolis ; M. K. Mac-killop-Brown, Southampton ; H. Derezinska, Warsaw ; B. M. Skeat, Sedbergh ; H. A. Nichols, New York ; John Purdie, Paisley ; D. Berners Wilson, Abergavenny ; M. E. Rose, Derby ; Grace Harris, Catford ; M. L. Brooke, Brackley ; G. G. Merrick, Warminster ; E. Toldridge, Washington ; A. E. Dewey, Wandsworth ; H. B. G. Sutherland, Fife ; A. C. Ococks, Kensington ; E. M. Walker, Bournemouth ; P. O' Donnell, Burnham (who sends a righteously indignant poem on stag-hunting, based on personal experience and Lord Coleridge's printed detestation, which deserves a place in an

animal-lover's anthology); M. Ormiston, Kensington; Mrs. MacCuaig, Edgbaston, and E. A. Crowder, Bedford.

Mr. T. E. Casson (Newton-le-Willows) submits three celebrant chants royal; two are too topical for our purposes, but for the third, which hymns the glories of Furness Abbey, and for a vigorous ballad of Jutland in the old-time manner, one-half the premium is awarded. In recognition of "The Offering," which takes us back to Vaughan and Traherne, and is so different from his usual stark realism, half the balance goes to "John Willwyn" (Gobowen), with the remainder to Miss Boothroyd on behalf of the "beauty" poets. To these and our unplaced competitors in this friendly rivalry, greeting, and may we meet together at the month-end with our offerings to beauty, sincerity, truth and fellowship in poetry.

* * *

The usual premium of £2 for the best poem or poems submitted to the Premium Editor during the month (without limitation of subject) is continued, and six books will be awarded in recognition of "highly commended."

Not more than *four* poems may be submitted at the same time.

Every entry must be certified as original and as not having appeared in print, and the name and address of the competitor must be attached to the MS.

All MSS. submitted for these premium awards should be addressed to "The Premium Editor," the Poets' Fellowship, POETRY REVIEW Office, before December 1st, accompanied by stamped addressed envelope, or international coupon, and, if criticism is desired, 2s. 6d. (If a more detailed postal criticism is desired, 5s. should be sent.)

Entries must be either typewritten or written in ink on one side of the paper only, and contributors must be members of the Poetry Society or registered postal subscribers to THE POETRY REVIEW.

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THE SERVICE CONTEST.

We are happy to conclude the "Service" contest, with the announcement of the awards. The offer of \$200 brought over 1,000 entries, and the five submitted to the judges received very favourable comment. Among the large number there were many deserving commendation and mention. The list of highly commended includes:—Henry L. Discon, Mary F. Smith, Mrs. W. L. Kenly, G. C. R. Connolly, Marie Tello Phillips, Douglas Tyacke, Vivian Y. Laramore, Mary Peyton, E. Ardis Whitman, Mabel A. Hanson, Helen L. King; and those receiving honourable mention:—E. P. Conkle, Capt. J. Munroe, Mary Alethea Woodward,

Margaret K. Moore, Anne Kelledy Gilbert, J. Marion Soper, A. McL. Thomas, Martha E. Pettuss, Marguerite Pollard, Mrs. Alice Lampson, Cora Warburton Hussa, Rev. G. A. Meier, Rev. E. J. Williams, Anna Guthrie Miles, Francis J. Mott, Guy V. Waterman, Marion S. Morse, Helena Deresinska, Charlotte B. Peck, Louise Burton Laidlaw, Homer Hurst. The widespread interest in this subject is significant. The Board of Adjudicators consisted of Com. Bellairs, Col. Anderson, Mrs. Bartlett, Mr. H. Woodhouse, Dr. Mary Whiteside, Mrs. J. L. Laidlaw, Dr. Seaver Woods and Mrs. L. Bennett, the donor.

By majority vote the five leading poems were placed in the following order:—"Service is Power," "Servants of Humanity," "Man Who Dreams," "Hands," "Service, 'Tis Truly Said." These contributors are requested to send in a claim to the London office.

The "Civilisation" awards have not been received from the adjudicators. Mrs. Bartlett reports many excellent poems have been entered.

Mrs. Bartlett has formed a Premium Poems Committee and hopes to have some interesting announcements to make in the January number of *THE POETRY REVIEW*.

The Editor has approved a course of individual postal instruction in the principles of versification, with direct personal application in each case, based on the beginner's own work and needs, as an extension of the "Poetry Review Personal Service." It is desirable that all writers should have a working knowledge of the technique of their art. A course of instruction and direction for readers who wish to deepen their appreciation of poetry is in preparation. Its primary object will be the elucidation of poetry as a criticism of life. Writers and readers who are interested in these matters are invited to communicate with the Editor.

We welcome the return of Mr. Hugh B. Cott, whose poem appears on another page, from the expedition on which, as we noted in a recent issue of *THE POETRY REVIEW*, he was sent by the Zoological Society of London to the Lower Zambesi, in order to make, and bring home, a collection of live animals (especially snakes, lizards, frogs and water-fowl) for the Zoo.

The W. K. Lewis premium competition for poems on "Disappointment"—defined on p. 359—closes on December 7th.

Mr. Dwight Morrow, the husband of Mrs. Morrow, the Poetry Society's Vice-President and Life Member, has been appointed by President Coolidge the U.S.A. Ambassador to Mexico.

VERSE SPEAKING EXAMINATIONS :

The test pieces for 1928 will be :

JUNIOR CERTIFICATE.

THE FORGET-ME-NOT.

(From Mr. Lewis Hind's collection of One Hundred Second Best Poems.)

WHEN to the flowers so beautiful
The Father gave a name,
Back came a little blue-eyed one
(All timidly it came) :
And standing at its Father's feet,
And gazing in His face,
It said in low and trembling tones,
" Dear God, the name Thou gavest me
Alas ! I have forgot."
Kindly the Father looked Him down
And said, " Forget ME not."

SENIOR CERTIFICATE.

" CHRISTMAS."

Written on H.M.S. *Iron Duke*, 1914.

A BOY was born at Bethlehem
That knew the haunts of Galilee,
He wandered on Mount Lebanon
And learned to love each forest tree.

But I was born at Marlborough,
And love the homely faces there ;
And for all other men besides
' Tis little love I have to spare.

I should not mind to die for them,
My own dear downs, my comrades true.
But that great heart of Bethlehem,
He died for men He never knew.

And yet, I think, at Golgotha,
As Jesus' eyes were closed in death,
They saw with love most passionate
The village street at Nazareth.

E. HILTON YOUNG, M.P.

ADULT CERTIFICATE.

LOVE AS A GENTLE STREAM.

DIDST thou but know the only touch of love,
 Thou would'st as soon go kindle fire with snow,
 As seek to quench the fire of love with words,
 The current, that with gentle murmur glides,
 Thou know'st, being stopp'd, impatiently doth rage ;
 But, when his fair course is not hindered,
 He makes sweet music with the enamelled stones,
 Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge
 He overtaketh in his pilgrimage ;
 And so by many winding nooks he strays,
 With willing sport, to the wild ocean.
 Then let me go, and hinder not my course ;
 I'll be as patient as a gentle stream,
 And make a pastime of each weary step,
 Till the last step have brought me to my love ;
 And there I'll rest, as, after much turmoil,
 A blessed soul doth in Elysium.

(*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act II.)

JUNIOR BRONZE MEDAL.

EASE IN EXPRESSION.

TRUE ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
 As those move easiest who have learned to dance ;
 'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,
 The sound must seem an echo to the sense.
 Soft is the strain when zephyr gently blows,
 And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows ;
 But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,
 The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar.
 When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
 The line, too, labours, and the words move slow ;
 Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,
 Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the main.

POPE.

SENIOR BRONZE MEDAL.

IMAGINATION.

THE lunatic, the lover, and the poet,
 Are of imagination all compact ;
 One sees more devils than vast hells can hold ;
 That is the madman : the lover, all as frantic,

THE POETRY REVIEW

Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt ;
 The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
 Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven ;
 And, as imagination bodies forth
 The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
 Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
 A local habitation and a name.

(*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act. V.)

ADULT BRONZE MEDAL.

MUSIC.

FOR do but note a wild and wanton herd,
 If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,
 Or any air of music touch their ears,
 You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,
 Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze,
 By the sweet power of music : therefore, the poet
 Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and floods ;
 Since naught so stockish, hard and full of rage,
 But music for time doth change his nature.
 The man that hath no music in himself,
 Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
 Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils :
 The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
 And his affections dark as Erebus :
 Let no such man be trusted.

(*Merchant of Venice*, Act. V.)

JUNIOR SILVER MEDAL.

VITAÌ LAMPADA (NEWBOLT).

SENIOR SILVER MEDAL.

A SINFUL SOUL.

I SEND you here a sort of allegory
 (For you will understand it) of a Soul,
 A sinful Soul, possess'd of many gifts,
 A spacious garden full of flowering weeds,
 A glorious Devil, large in heart and brain,
 That did love Beauty only (Beauty seen
 In all varieties of mould and mind)
 And knowledge for its beauty, seeing not
 That Beauty, Good and Knowledge are three sisters

That doat upon each other, friends to man,
 Living together under the same roof,
 And never can be sunder'd without tears.
 And he that shuts Love out, in turn shall be
 Shut out from Love, and on his threshold lie
 Howling in outer darkness. Nor for this
 Was common clay ta'en from the common earth,
 Moulded by God, and temper'd with the tears
 Of angels to the perfect shape of man. TENNYSON.

ADULT SILVER MEDAL.

BLINDNESS.

THUS with the year
 Seasons return ; but not to me returns
 Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn
 Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
 Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine ;
 But cloud instead and ever-during dark
 Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
 Cut off, and, for the book of knowledge fair,
 Presented with a universal blank
 Of Nature's works, to me expunged and rased,
 And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
 So much the rather thou, Celestial Light,
 Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
 Irradiate ; there plant eyes ; all mist from thence
 Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
 Of things invisible to mortal sight. MILTON.

* * *

Dr. H. H. Hulbert will be engaged in the Poetry Society's verse-speaking examinations during November and December as follows :—
 November 5th, London ; November 14th, 15th, 16th, Great Malvern ; November 17th, Worcester ; November 19th, Brighton and Worthing ; November 21st, Crewe ; November 22nd, Liverpool ; November 23rd, Blackpool ; November 24th and 25th, Seascales ; November 26th, Kendal ; December 3rd, London ; December 8th, Harrogate ; December 9th, Sheffield ; December 7th, Nottingham.

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Other verse-speaking examinations will be held at Stockton-on-Tees (November 26th), Bideford (where a centre of the Poetry Society is being formed), and Redlands, Bristol.

A TENNYSON COMMENTARY:

TENNYSON'S PARTIALITY FOR THE WORD "BLOOD."

In the *New Statesman* of May 22nd there is a tale told of Tennyson by a correspondent: the Poet-Laureate, talking at lunch with a young man who would use the word "awfully," at last could stand it no longer and enquired why he insisted in profaning one of the finest words in the English language. Not at all crushed, the young man enquired what synonym he could use; "very" was too weak a word. "Say 'bloody,'" said Tennyson.

And indeed why should not he have used the word "bloody"? True it might have offended the susceptibilities of others, but that apart, is it not a good full word with a strong vowel sound and pleasant consonants? Doubtless in fact the sound of the word "blood" had a great deal to do with Tennyson's partiality for it.

Moreover, the poetic possibilities of the word are very great. Nowadays perhaps its powerful associations have decreased somewhat; the fault lies with its too frequent use. But in the days of Tennyson it was a word of enormous power, suggesting death and wounds and battle and murder—suggesting heat and redness and madness and tragedy. Perhaps it will be contended that this is reading too much into an innocent word. But reflect for a moment upon the power of the thing itself; then the suggestions attributed to the word will not seem so extravagant. There are numbers of delicately-minded people who faint whenever they see blood, even if it flow but from a small cut in the finger!

This, then, we may presume to be sufficient to explain a lack of shyness, at the least, towards the use of this word. But does it in any way explain a frequent use? Certainly in part it does; for the rest, the enigma lies in Tennyson's temperament.

Tennyson more than other poets loved a passage like this:

"With blaze of bugle, clamour of men,
Roll of cannon and clash of arms."

His poetry was not made to stimulate thought; in that sense it was peaceful and sedative, but he had no objection to action, and especially was he fond of the type of movement of which the famous onomatopœic passage in *The Passing of Arthur*, beginning "Dry clashed his harness . . .," is another example. Now "blood" always comes well into description poetry of this type. Apart from its sound and apart from its value as a "strong" word, it was especially acceptable to a poet who liked passages in which the word would naturally appear.

J. A. C. CRUIKSHANK.

END OF VOL. XVIII.